

RET's Seventh Annual
Worst Book of the Year Award

Anthony Tortora
Argot of a Swindle

THE AMERICAN SPECTATOR®

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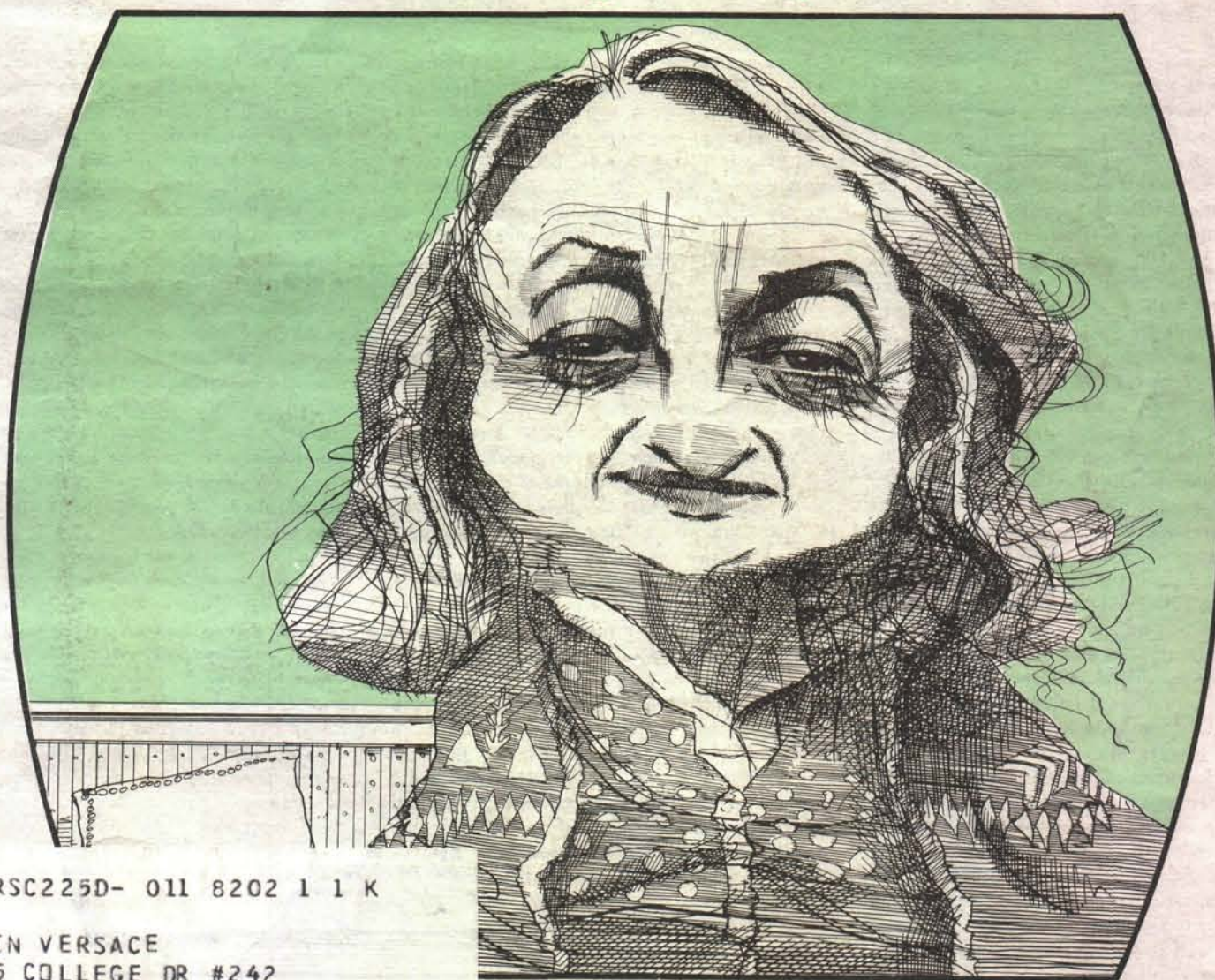
NO. 2

George Gilder: The Great Capitalist Giveaway

Delba Winthrop: Tocqueville Volunteers

Robert W. Kagan: The NEA Politburo

The Thunderclap of Betty Friedan



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A MONTHLY REVIEW
EDITED BY R. EMMETT TYRRELL, JR.

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BY THE YEAR



THE CONTINUING CRISIS



• December—the Christmas season arrived and exited, leaving our Liberal reformers blubbering in a hail of cap gun fire. The month began with editorialists all over the Republic solemnizing suave Ron's unhorsing of the 97th Congress and ended with millions of kids squealing merrily over their toy pistols, their bow and arrow sets, their deadly armor divisions, and their dolls, girls' makeup sets, toddlers' brassières, literally thousands of sex-specific playthings. It has been a time of troubles. No reformer is safe!

• In recent years, the heirs and assigns of Eleanor Roosevelt have during this cheery season temporarily forsaken their struggles with the Eastern Bankers and surviving white slavers to bring to America's children that peculiarly sour vision of the world that is the reformer's inspiration and constant condition. Working through such disagreeable cadres as the Consumer Affairs Committee of the Americans for Democratic Action and the Non-Sexist Child Development Project of the Women's Action Alliance, the reformers take to the talk show circuit, diabolize the toy barons, and harass parents. Notwithstanding all their dread stratagems, the kids usually triumph. This year the reformers primly unveiled their sacred index of approved playthings for hermaphrodites, but the kids guffawed and Santa Claus took their side. Sex and violence proliferated beneath the holly, and most of it was plastic! The toy tycoons are reporting a boom season.

• And Christmas was a fount of brouhahas in other quarters also. In San Francisco, a city bus driver stopped his vehicle for over a half hour when passengers persisted in singing "Jingle Bells" *andante* despite his protests. In Pawtucket, Rhode Island, the Christian establishment thwarted the American Civil Liberties Union by raising that city's nativity scene on private ground, though they probably could have raised it on public ground—and with ACLU approval!—had they the wit to claim it an educational tool for demonstrating inadequate housing conditions or the capacity of animals and humans to cohabit amiably in a non-capitalist society. Still, the Christians did suffer some setbacks. Two Santa Clauses were mugged, one in Dover-Foxcroft, Maine, the other in Benton Harbor, Michigan. A third has charged false imprisonment in Oklahoma City, and in Manila six men, possibly members of the Knights of Columbus, were charged with burning a witch beyond recognition.

• Apprehension that Japan might be entering upon a time of social unease similar to our own arose when a Japanese factory worker was stabbed to death by a robot. In Warrington, England, the government's records office has given Mr. Matt Brooks what he terms "a terrible shock." Replying to Mr. Brooks' request for retirement information, the record office informed the old boy that he is 79 years old. Mr. Brooks had thought he was 63. In Boulder, Colorado, bricks bearing parts of the body of Mr. Laurel L. Boushley were buried in a private ceremony attended by members of the

Boushley family and those of his friends considered mature enough to repress a laugh. Precise details of Mr. Boushley's death are not known, but plant foremen at the Colorado Brick Company theorize that Mr. Boushley perished when he fell into a mixing vat, for additional parts of Mr. Boushley have now been recovered from the vat and from nearby equipment. No attempt will be made to reassemble Mr. Boushley, and the parts will be interred at a separate burial plot.

• That Princeton University drum major who led an unauthorized parade following his school's football triumph over Cornell has received an official pardon from New Jersey's Governor Byrne, and in New York there was gloom on the Bowery when private trash collectors ended a 17-day strike and began removing those colossal piles of garbage that had meant so much to so many. Arctic winds blew upon American-Israeli relations; and in Alexandria, Louisiana, a 20-year-old jail inmate who had ingested a toothpick, toothbrush handle, three spoons, and a piece of cloth in a clever attempt to escape, died. On December 11, French aficionados of the sorely pressed *nouvelle cuisine* were put at ease when a French court rejected the citizenship claim of Mr. Jean-Bedel Bokassa, the former emperor of the Central African Empire and suspected cannibal. There had been rumors that he intended to open a restaurant in Paris. America's Roman Catholic bishops may be revising their position on arms policy in light of the month's police actions in Poland. There Solidarity, armed sparsely enough to please the most irenic American bishop, was overwhelmed almost instantaneously by Poland's military. Throughout the West philippics were voiced at various decibels from all except French Communist Party chief Georges Marchais, but the salient feature of the crack-down—though never widely noted—was the military action's swift finality. One minute there was political vitality, then armor and silence. It is a thing for all disarmament fanatics to contemplate.

• Snorts and bellows were heard from the women of the fevered brow on December 23 when U.S. District Judge Marion J. Callister ruled that states could still withdraw their ERA ratification and that Congress had committed mayhem on the Constitution by extending the deadline for ratification in 1978. The decision may have been a lethal blow to the mischievous amendment and to the hopes and dreams of all those eager lawyers who had envisioned flush times ahead. Our sexually integrated navy may soon come under fire from Planned Parenthood. According to the commander of the U.S.S. *Yellowstone*, nearly a quarter of that ship's female crew became pregnant last year. Two Oceanside, California women took a bath when a con artist placed an out-of-order sign on the night deposit box at a branch of California First Bank, suggesting that nocturnal depositors use a yellow metal box that the scoundrel had left nearby. Proof that the handicapped are

beginning to participate fully in our society was provided by a thief in Freeport, Long Island, when he rode his wheelchair into the Friendly Freeport Gulf Station, brandished a gun, collected \$487, and ordered a bystander to wheel him off into the dark. Yet the occasion was not totally free of ugly prejudice, there being many references by the constabulary as to the certitude of "a quick arrest."

• In cultural news, vandals doused Elvis Presley's "eternal flame" for a second and possibly final time. His enemies are apparently growing in number and the used-car salesman who has faithfully maintained the flame is now a pitiful bankrupt. If you felt a little blue on December 8, it can probably be explained by the fact that December 8 was the anniversary of John Lennon's death. Art lovers all over the world took it pretty hard, but in Kansas City, The Dreamers, that group formed to discuss Mr. Lennon's philosophy, held several seminars. Four thousand hours of former President Richard Nixon's tapes will be lost until 1987 owing to the Reagan budget cuts. And there was still more proof last month that the oceans of the world suffer from an overabundance of whales. At Nantucket Island, 14 of the vicious beasts spilled onto the shore, causing the usual health problems but very little constructive talk about how to rid the world of these aquatic oafs.

• In Monterey, California, Mr. David Fisse, the scuba diver, apparently bit off more than he could chew when he promised to exterminate the great white shark that had killed a local surfer. Photographs and stories of his long vigil seated on a rock in the Pacific sent him around the bend, and after all this media attention he was finally committed for psychiatric observation. Once again George Jean Nathan's wisdom is confirmed: "Whom the gods would destroy they first make famous."

• An indication of the frightening jingoism that is overtaking the country was witnessed in the Milwaukee County Zoo where zoo director Gilbert Boese was barred from flying the American flag at half mast to commemorate the death of Samson, the zoo's most illustrious gorilla. In Easton, Maryland, Mr. Kemal Cem Sekip Deniz wants to lengthen his name to Turkmenogluen Yilmaz Barbuoglu Saras Deniz so that more people will be aware of his Russian heritage and "because he favors the policies of the Soviet Union." The KGB never sleeps!

• Finally, in Los Angeles Mr. John (Johnny Wadd) Holmes, the talented star of *theatre pornographique*, is under indictment. Mr. Holmes has written five "children's classics," and he once informed the *Ann Arbor News* of his loathing for the movies of John Wayne ("there's blood and guts everywhere with gallons of stage blood spewed all over. People send their kids to watch that stuff, it's disgusting. So are adult films with sadomasochism and killing"). Now he has been arrested on suspicion of the bludgeon murders of four Californians last July. The New Right is playing tough!

—RET

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The American Spectator was founded in 1924 by George Nathan and Truman Newberry over a cheap domestic ale in McSorley's Old Ale House. In 1967 the Saturday Evening Club took it over, rechristening it *The Alternative: An American Spectator*; but by November 1977 the word "alternative" had acquired such an esoteric fragrance that in order to discourage unsolicited manuscripts from florists, beauticians, and other creative types the Club reverted to the magazine's original name. *The American Spectator* is now published monthly at 102 West Sixth Street, Bloomington, Indiana. Second class postage paid at Bloomington, Indiana, and additional mailing offices.

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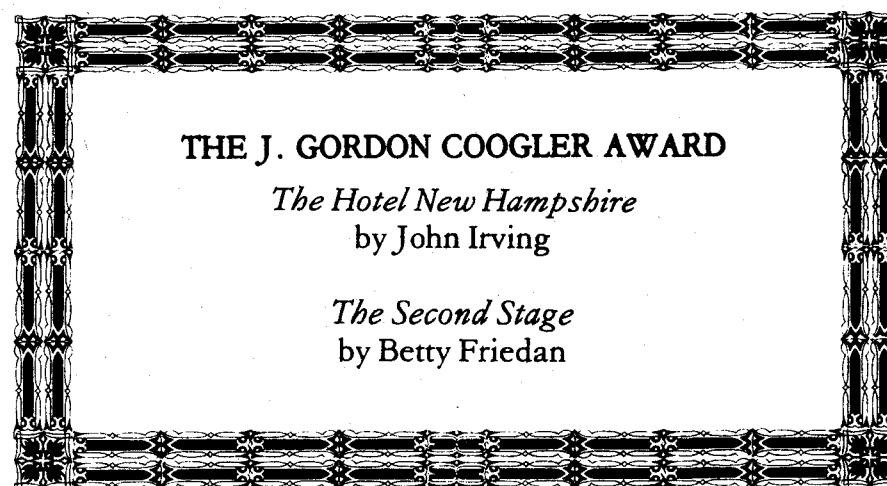
THE WORST BOOK OF THE YEAR

by R. Emmett Tyrrell, Jr.

If the fierce disciples of the Moral Majority ever work their wicked will upon the intelligentsia of the great Republic, putting the torch to libraries, boarding up the great publishing houses, and placing our most renowned authors and authoresses in concentration camps, there to copy and recopy the epistles of Saint Paul and the bulls of the Reverend Falwell, will it mean the dawn of a Dark Age or merely more of the same under different commissars? Will the minds of America go hungry without the infantile ribaldries tapped out by the darlings from the Republic's Writers Workshops where half-wits sweat and bawl in arrested adolescence? Will illumination cease without the Puritanical pontifications filling the nonfiction publishers lists? Let us face the question unflinchingly. I am as much a patriot as Dick Cavett or Bishop Paul Elmer More. Nonetheless, I believe that the bulk of the books published here are as worthless as the literary products of Moscow and no less sniveling. Moreover, the Soviet writer is in thrall to a dogma decidedly more dignified and plausible. The claptrap published in Moscow at least hearkens back to the mind of an interesting crank. The claptrap published here issues from more random sources: a metaphysician resident in Martha's Vineyard, an irked vegetarian from San Diego, professors from the City University of New York. Even Marx would laugh at our regnant dogma, but first he would scratch.

In fiction the males are wimps, the females godlike, the authors bed-wetters. In nonfiction the theses are the fanciful delusions of fanatics, liberated from reticence by their own stupidity. This year's J. Gordon Coogler Award* for the worst work of fiction goes to John Irving for *The Hotel New Hampshire*.† The Coogler laureate for nonfiction is Betty Friedan, authoress of *The Second Stage*.‡

Both of these writers draw their credenda from the same conventicles



where hermaphroditic men mince about with dyspeptic Janes and where credulous New Age Liberals pay the bills—usually with the taxpayers' money. The immensities they all ponder are the vagaries of imbeciles. Their enthusiasms have all been tried and unhorsed by the experience. Friedan seems dimly aware of some of this. She now agrees that careers—even on Wall Street, even on a garbage truck, even at Harvard—are not paradise. Irving shows no hint of this new enlightenment. If possible, he is even more stupid than Betty.

Irving is the typical "serious"

*The award is named after the illustrious poet and unintentional humorist, J. Gordon Coogler (1865-1901), revered by the literary establishment of his time as the "Bard of the Congaree," "Palmetto Poet," and "Songbird of the Saluda." Occasionally, he was boomed to be the Republic's poet laureate. Coogler awed Americans for years with volume after volume of his *Purely Original Verse*, from which we pluck:

"From early youth to the frost of age
Man's days have been a mixture
Of all that constitutes in life
A dark and gloomy picture."

Mr. Coogler's recent obscurity has been somewhat mitigated by the introduction of *cooglerism* into the language to mean "a solemn absurdity."

†E.P. Dutton, \$15.50.

‡Summit Books, \$14.95.

writer of the moment, a sentimental sap lost in reveries of the toilette and the lunatic asylum. Sometimes he is the Joyce of his day, impatient with injustice, cruelty, and fuddy-duddies, tapping out bold roars that sound like the bold roars of a Grace Metalious. Other times he is a Henry Miller or a Hemingway; yet all his brawls, his prostitutes, his incest, rape, and infibulation are without stench or bruise. He is the perfect alumnus of one of those ghastly Writers Conferences to which the minimally talented repair with mom and dad's consent "to learn the writers' craft." There he reads the great books, meets the Great Writers, and is confirmed in the false pieties of the time.

When he writes he writes the rugged stuff. *The Hotel New Hampshire's* obligatory godlike gal has just been gang raped by villainous preppies (that is correct, by preppies; Mr. Irving went to Exeter, so he *knows*) and rescued by the obligatory godlike blacks. One of the New Age darkies administers a New Age therapy:

"Hey, listen," said Junior Jones. "You know what? When someone touches you and you don't *want* to be touched, that's not really *being* touched—you got to believe me. It's not *you* they touch when they touch you that way; they don't really *get* you, you understand. You've still got *you* inside you. Nobody's touched you—not really. You're a really good girl, you believe me? You've still got *you* inside you, you believe that?"

Well, of course, she believed it. Everyone at the writers' conference believes this sort of earnest psychologizing. It and pop sociology constitute the classical learning in such places, and when a dullard like Friedan stops in to schmooze and to illuminate the ever-changing dilemmas of this ever-changing world, all the budding Hemingways don their rough Levis and jogging shoes and head out to *huzza huzza* her. That she and Irving should be ushered into the Coogler limelight, then, is eminently appropriate.

Friedan is one of our foremost national pontificators, which is to exalt her above a multitude. The Republic may not be abundant with learned minds—higher education has seen to that—but it is full of fanatics vehemently pontificating quackery in the abstruse. In the early 1960s the authoress's bugaboo was "the feminine mystique," with its idealization of the concubine and the garbage disposal. Now her bugaboo is "the feminist mystique," a "reactive mystique" whose aversion to family life played right into the hands of Ronald Reagan and "the far right." Her solution is a "second stage" that comes down smartly in favor of "the choice to have babies." Friedan has discerned "that core of women's personhood that is fulfilled through love, nurture, home." The family "is the nutrient matrix of our personhood." Hence, the second stage will be "generative," and even observant of "the grounding . . . realities of daily life." This glad and glorious morn will keep the harried forces of patriarchy on the run, however, for the second stage will be lived in strict accordance with the Beta "mode." That is the feminine "mode" characterized by "synthesizing, into intuitive, qualitative thinking" that comprehends the "relational." These are her findings! She has taught these mysteries at Temple University, Yale University, The New School for Social

Research, and Queens College. She has been a Senior Research Associate at the Center for the Social Sciences at Columbia. The Ford Foundation funds her "researches."

The plangent stupidity of this egregious pest, then, is not unfamiliar. It is the wisdom of our pop thinkers, the yahoos who liven things up on college campuses, in foundations, in the churches, wherever nervous breakdowns are admired and the growing-changing-experiencing ethic prevails. She has no more bugs in her coco than any of the other *philosophes* who write those moronic books about body language and future

shock and the rights of puppy dogs. That she was—as Anne Crutcher points out in these pages—asked to lecture at the United States Military Academy against manliness and on behalf of an army populated by "sensitive and yearning and vulnerable" George Pattons is but an indication of how far this doltishness has been allowed to travel in modern America.

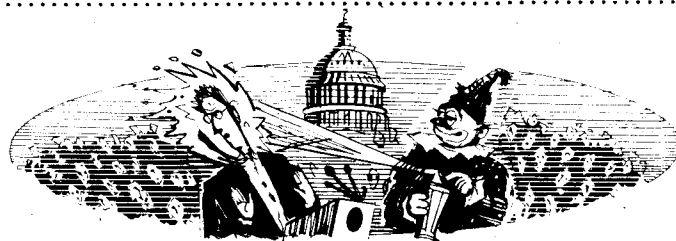
Friedan has achieved a lot. She has spoken to an entire generation of young women and left them miserable, filling housewives with doubt

and embarrassment while sending the professional gals out to scrimmage for their daily grub. The spectacle has fortified the prejudices of every misogynist. Though the working gals have multiplied in number, they have not multiplied in any achievements not directly tied to politics and to government coercion. In most areas of male endeavor there are no more female prodigies than ever before, and in some areas of endeavor, for instance international athletic competition, American women have lost their edge to the women from the least liberated lands of all. Now Friedan suggests the gals have

babies, but that the carping continue not only against men but also against the corporations.

I do not believe that she could have achieved so much had she not been so invincibly stupid through all these years. For that matter I do not believe that Irving could have written so many novels were he not so stupid. Given a bit more intelligence, he would have reread his first novel and shot himself. In our age, basic stupidity has replaced talent and learning as the engine for intellectual achievement. This year's Coogler laureates are characteristic of their time. □

C A P I T O L I D E A S



SOLIDARITY NO MORE

by Tom Bethell

The foreign affairs columnist Georgie Anne Geyer, who returned from a visit to Poland shortly before the imposition of martial law there, told me that the Poles she met talked about the rise of Solidarity as the Polish "revolution." But that word is used in the West to dignify and glamorize political change in the direction of increased state power over the lives of individuals. Therefore it defies rhetorical etiquette to use it to characterize a *diminution* of such power (which is what Solidarity has tried to achieve), however "revolutionary" such a diminution might be.

As far as I know, you will find no reference to "the Polish revolution" in our leading newspapers during the 1980-81 period. On the other hand you will find many allusions to "the Polish crisis," a striking example of the way our media heavyweights see the world as though through Soviet eyes. There have also been plenty of veiled allusions to the threat to world peace caused by hotheaded or unruly Solidarity leaders, resulting in "instability" and the concomitant dan-

ger of Soviet intervention. This in turn would harm "East-West relations," the new term for *détente*. Such commentators view the world as occupied by one very dangerous beast, the Soviet bear, who nevertheless will eat us last if we are nice to it and don't provoke it too much. They hope only for euthanasia—a painless death.

Rhetorical nuances may seem

trivial, but they are important because they are all but invisible and so can influence our perception of events subliminally. (A conspiracy? No, editors and writers themselves are for the most part hardly conscious of such details. They merely respond to the dictates of intellectual fashion, the defiance of which would be perceived as a "gaffe" more nearly literary than political.)



As the world now knows, military rule was imposed on Poland on December 13 and at that point I suppose "the Polish crisis" became a defensible usage (but why not "counterrevolution"?). Let us take a look at some of the rhetorical nuances and opinions expressed in our leading newspapers in the few days following the military intervention. On Monday, December 14, *Washington Post* reporter Bradley Graham, who was in Poland at the time, reported from Warsaw that there was "a military council now ruling Poland." This I think was more accurate than John Darnton's version in the *New York Times*, according to which Poland's "new military leaders issued a decree of martial law today." A leader, one senses, has willing followers (the consent of the led); a ruler has a rod of iron.

In an adjacent *New York Times* column, David Binder in Washington compounded the problem by describing Wojciech Jaruzelski as "Poland's soldier-leader." Why not "military dictator," the epithet so frequently attached to Chile's Gen. Pinochet? It is hard to resist the conclusion that "dictator" is a term reserved exclusively for allies of the United States. (A prize for any reader who can spot an instance of a Soviet bloc dictator labeled as such.) In the unlikely event

Tom Bethell, *The American Spectator's* Washington correspondent, holds the DeWitt Wallace Chair in Communications at the American Enterprise Institute.

that Jaruzelski turns out to be Polish patriot rather than Soviet puppet—there is still speculation on this score as I write—I imagine that he will come in for harsher media treatment as he would then become the agent of renewed “instability” in “East-West relations.”

On the same day, a *Washington Post* editorial perceived that “the problem” with Solidarity has been (“along with the rage and the rectitude”) a “tendency to tactical excess.” (So Solidarity may have got what it deserved after all.) Anthony Lewis in the *New York Times*, on the other hand, took a distinctly hard line. (“Repression is the familiar Soviet method of dealing with resistance to illegitimate regimes in Eastern Europe.”) Lewis is smart enough to know that moral arbiters must get to the front of the indignation line. Later in the week Lewis complained of “bayonet socialism.” Bayonets are present in all socialist states, of course, but only unsheathed when the people refuse to do what they are told. Military economics depends upon military threat.

In a long *Times* dispatch on the Polish economy, Darnton told of “the failure of Communism, in the eyes of the workers, to deliver on its promises of a better life.” But deeper into the story he let us know, none too subtly, that bad as Communism may be (“in the eyes of the workers”), capitalism could turn out to be worse. “Solidarity incorporates several ideological strains,” he wrote, “some of them contradictory. Many of its members evidence outrage at the inequalities that have grown up [and] want to eliminate them. Others favor an expansion of private enterprise that, ultimately, would lead to further inequalities.”

The next day there was a sad little *New York Times* editorial, in the form of an imaginary dialogue between Jaruzelski and Lech Walesa, which was a veiled appeal to the Poles to knuckle under and stop destabilizing East-West relations. And Tom Wicker contributed a shameful column, telling us the Polish situation was “frightening” because it was “a reminder of the nuclear abyss at whose edge the superpowers stand poised.” If the Polish people “resist,” Wicker the Timid went on, “or if the Polish ‘disease’ breaks out elsewhere in Eastern Europe or in the Soviet Union,” then there are “real dangers of East-West conflict.” Wicker sought to dissociate himself from the word “disease” by putting

it in quotes, but at the same time he let us know just how “frightening” he found Solidarity.

Philip Geyelin struck an even more inept note in his *Washington Post* column a few days later with the following remarkable paragraph: “The grimmest outcome is obvious: a breakdown of public order, a refusal of Polish army units to carry out orders to shoot rioters or strikers, sabotage of vital Soviet communication links through Poland to West Germany, a form of civil war, Soviet military intervention and suppression by force.” This would lead to “anarchy, bloodshed, starvation and repressive Soviet rule,” and (you guessed it), “incalculable” effects on “East-West relations.” Geyelin must be hoping that Polish army units “carry out orders to shoot rioters or strikers” to avert such terrible consequences.

In the *Times*’s Tuesday news columns, “the Polish leader” (Gen. Jaruzelski) was in control, the Soviet news agency Tass was there to warn us not “to interfere in affairs that lie within the competence of the Poles only,” the British government was reported to be observing “a policy of strict nonintervention,” while the West German government was “following strictly a policy of non-interference.” (And indeed why should one interfere with leaders who stabilize East-West relations?)

On the same day the *Washington Post* editorially detected that Jaruzelski, “leader of the army, government and Communist Party,” had suspended “with great firmness” the liberties that Solidarity had tried to create. (But surely firmness is preferable to rage, rectitude, and ex-

cess?) Joseph Kraft, on the other hand, defied editorial etiquette by calling Jaruzelski “the Polish strongman,” a title last applied in the *Washington Post* to Ferdinand Marcos of the Philippines. Mary McGrory opined that the Communist overlords “fear” the Poles so much that Moscow “dare not send in the tanks,” despite “the greatest provocation Solidarity has yet displayed.” (“Provocative” is a Tass-word, implying that the West has a moral duty to appease the Soviet Union.)

Was there a hint of concern in James Reston’s column the next day? He had detected that “something is deeply wrong with the Western alliance,” resulting in “a major reappraisal” going on either at the White House or Reston’s desk, one couldn’t tell which. “Very few people here think,” he concluded, perhaps accurately, that “the foreign policy decision-making process in the Reagan Administration is working.”

In his opening paragraph, William Safire brought out some of the rhetorical armament that has been mothballed for the sake of East-West relations: “On orders from Moscow,” he wrote, “Poland’s puppet Communist regime has declared war on the Polish workers’ bid for self-government, jailing thousands and beginning a crushing military control comparable to the Nazi occupation.” And on the front page of the *Times* a small popgun had at least been uncorked. A headline read: ARMY RULERS SAID TO BREAK SOME MAJOR STRIKES. What, no leaders?

Back at the *Post* George Will did well to point out that “in a national

radio broadcast a *Post* editor put much blame for the crisis on . . . you guessed it: the Reagan Administration,” while at the *Wall Street Journal* Hodding Carter III surprised us all (and no doubt his former bosses Cyrus Vance and Jimmy Carter) by observing, accurately, that there had been “in some quarters” a “seemingly irresistible temptation” to explain the crackdown as a response to “excessive demands” by Solidarity, and to admonish us to be quiet lest we “rock the boat of international stability.”

The *Washington Post*, be it said, was taking a much harder line by the end of the week, moving to Reagan’s right and worrying that at his press conference “he let the Soviets off scot-free . . . there is something gross about not putting the blame where it most belongs, the Kremlin.” *Post* editors were ignoring the simpler-before-tyranny message of Jimmy Carter, reported elsewhere in the paper that day, in which he urged us to recall that “only the Soviet Union has the capability to threaten our very existence, and for that reason alone the superpower relationship must always be foremost . . .”

New York Times foreign affairs columnist Flora Lewis thought that “whatever happens . . . the nascent arms reduction talks with Moscow must be preserved,” a message she repeated three days later, with the observation that the crackdown was “all the more reason” to stop the arms race. The problem, as she saw it, was that during Brezhnev’s rule “Soviet society has been congealed.” What was needed in the USSR was “change,” but “without upheaval.” Similarly, the *Times* editorially looked for “evolutionary change in the Communist system.”

The common denominator of such comments is the refusal to criticize Communism itself. Sometimes to be sure it is guilty of “excesses,” sometimes socialism wears bayonets. But if only “evolutionary change” is permitted, then we will have a nice friendly Communism, wearing a human face; a system in which there will be no profits or profiteers, and no inequalities of wealth or income. One of these days, I suppose, our media trendies will see that this cannot be; that it will never happen; that there can be no equality between those who give and those who receive commands; and no freedom under a system which prohibits voluntary transactions and exchanges between individuals outside the supervision of the state. The system must be ended, not mended. □





George Gilder

CAPITALISM IS FOR GIVERS

Blessed be the altruist.

The *New Republic*, that thoroughly secular voice of American liberalism, recently found reason to celebrate the Pope. Flaunting the Pontiff on its cover as a friendly old coot and man of the people—suggestive perhaps of Peter Falk's "Columbo" in a terry cloth wrap—the liberal magazine proclaimed him an ardent enemy of Reaganomics and foe of capitalism. The article itself, which was written by Nicholas von Hoffman, quoted heavily from the latest encyclical *Laborem Exercens*. According to von Hoffman, the Pope emphatically rejects the free-market ideas, founded on a concept of *homo economicus* and governed by the invisible hand of Adam Smith, that supposedly prevail in the Reagan Administration and the circles of supply-side theory.

This article, attacking the religious and moral presumptions of capitalism, aroused only one letter of rebuke, a lame libertarian slur on the Pope. In fact, as I have learned from the barrage of derision heaped on any references to religion or faith in a book of

economics, most of America's capitalist intellectuals readily and even fervently grant the essential correctness of the von Hoffman claim. Capitalism, in their view, is fundamentally amoral and materialist. The idea that our economic system finds its roots in the religious order—and will wither in the world of secular self-interest to which its advocates consign it—arouses bitter hostility among conservatives.

Yet the belief that economics comprises a separate realm, almost completely divorced from the religious foundations of civilized life, is preposterous on its face. If religion is true, its truth must necessarily apply to the economic sphere—to all the great ventures of enterprise and production to which all societies devote so much of their time and treasures. The fact is that the central truths of most of the world's religions—and particularly the Judeo-Christian tradition—apply luminously to capitalism.

...

Capitalism begins with giving. Not from greed, avarice, or even "self-love" can one expect the rewards of commerce, but from a spirit closely akin to altruism, a regard for the needs of others, a benevolent, outgoing, and courageous temper of mind. Such a universal trait as self-interest—altogether as prevalent in any socialist backwater or deadening bureaucracy as in the realms of great enterprise—will reveal virtually nothing of the rare sources of riches in human society. Not taking and consuming, but giving, risking, and creating are the characteristic roles of the capitalist, the key producer of the wealth of nations, from the least developed to the most advanced.

The evidence begins in the works of "economic anthropology," from Marcel Mauss's classic *The Gift* to Claude Levi-Strauss's *The Savage Mind*. Most studies of primitive society abound with

tales of gifts, offerings, "prestations," presents, tributes, and ritual exchanges, all the elaborate patterns of giving and receiving that preoccupy tribal groups when they struggle to transcend the limits of their lives of labor and subsistence. In fact, Levi-Strauss avers that "gift exchange and potlatch is a universal mode of culture."

In this voluminous literature anthropologists readily assert that these "gifts" are not offered without an expectation of return. "Reciprocity," as Levi-Strauss writes, is the "very essence of social life. Such gifts are either exchanged immediately for equivalent gifts, or received by the beneficiaries on the condition that on a subsequent occasion they will return the gesture with other gifts whose value often exceeds the first, but which bring about in their turn a right to receive later new gifts which themselves surpass the magnificence of those previously given . . . give back with proper 'interest' gifts previously received."

Like most analysts of this activity, Levi-Strauss describes it in economic terms: "give back with *interest*," a right to "reciprocation," and "conditions" for "exchanges." But both Mauss and Levi-Strauss insist that the exchanges are not



chiefly economic. "These reciprocal gifts," writes Levi-Strauss, summarizing Mauss, "have a much more important function in these societies than in ours . . . this primitive form of exchange . . . is what Mauss calls 'a total social fact,' i.e., an event which has at the same time social and religious, magic and economic, utilitarian and sentimental, legal and moral significance." The two French intellectuals lament the more abstract, "purely economic" modes of exchange found in modern society, in which gift-giving is said to play a trivial or merely ceremonial role. As socialists, they maintain that modern capitalism, with its impersonal marketplace, leads to alienation and conflict, to a psychologically shallow and paltry existence, contrasting with all the magic, moral, and sentimental resonance of life among savages.

The anthropological literature, however, does not sustain the idea that the exchanges of primitive society produced a more benevolent form of social existence than prevails in the modern world. As in all societies, the generous spirit warred continuously with the appeals of envy and rapine. Aborting the drive to give and create was the impulse to steal and destroy. The ceremonial offerings often took place between tribes that were otherwise feuding, and some successful tribesmen made gifts chiefly to appease the jealousy of others. The potlatch itself was sometimes accompanied by long sieges of fighting and violence that wrecked and wasted most of the accumulated wealth and good will. The tendency to romanticize primitive life is one of the less illuminating biases of anthropology.

Nonetheless, how ever complex and tangled in motive and historical development, these pervasive efforts to transcend selfishness, to extend human intercourse, to reach out to others with offerings to them constitute the psychological and

anthropological roots of capitalist wealth. Presumably because the compensation was not specified beforehand or paid in what we call money, anthropologists everywhere depict this activity in the idiom of giving and gifts. Although the acknowledged champions in this field were the Kwakiut of Alaska and British Columbia (celebrated by Levi-Strauss for a "genius . . . in their expression of the fundamental themes of primitive culture"), such activities were also common in hundreds of other well-documented societies.

Capitalism is not an artificial or transitory phase of human existence, to be replaced at will by some superior economic system shortly to be invented by the economics faculty at MIT. Capitalism—the system of private property with freedom to give, explore, and create—partakes of the very essence of all good and productive human activity.

Feasting and potlatching illustrate a capitalist tendency to assemble and distribute wealth. But many primitive societies, for all their gift-giving, remained poor. No matter how many coconuts or cowrie shells or cattle are ultimately exchanged, the two parties may well end up, indeed often did end up, little better off than before. The crucial question with regard to gift-giving as a prototype of capitalism is the source of capital gains, or the increase in the total value of the society's goods. How do societies become rich?

Trading itself provides part of the answer. Many theorists have focused on voluntary exchange as the secret of the creation of wealth. Any such exchange presumably does improve the positions of both parties, or they would not have agreed to make it. Free market transactions continually improve the distribution of goods in a community by moving them

from owners who value them less to owners who value them more. Value lies always essentially in the eyes of the beholder. Subjective profits do steadily expand the real wealth of the tribe.

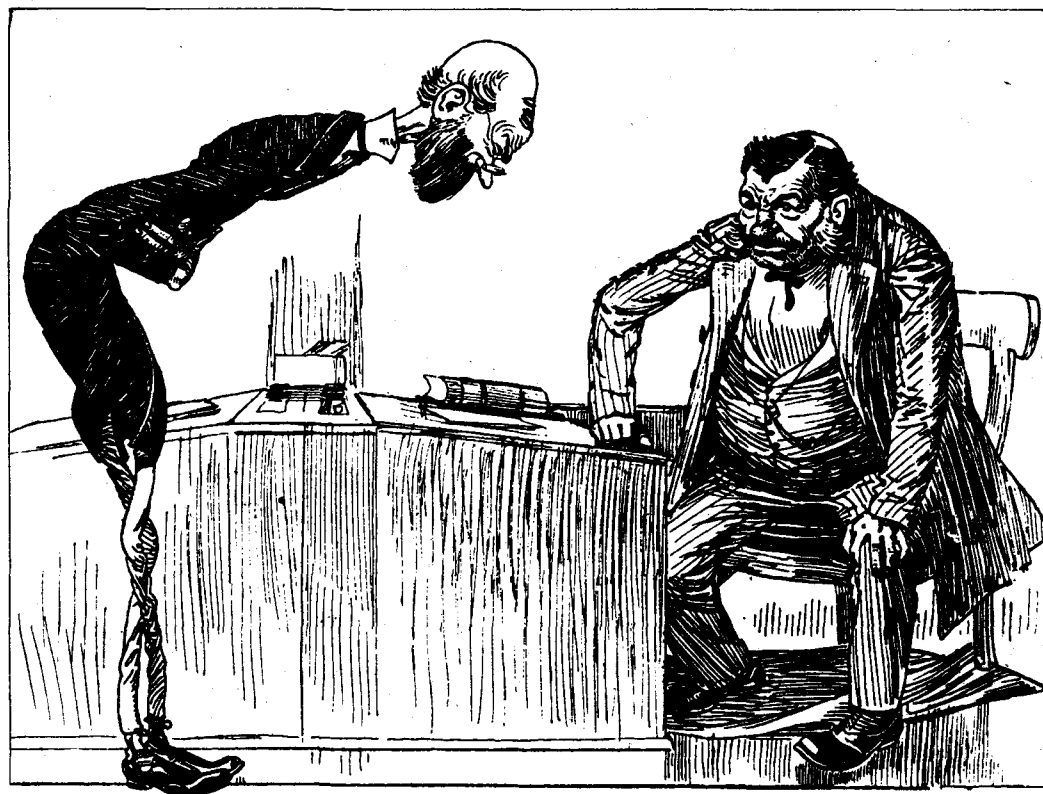
A further explanation comes from Adam Smith. Smith argues that the extent of the market—the reach of the exchange system—determines the possible range for the division of labor, the process of increasing specialization that he sees as the source of economic growth. Only if the fisherman can trade his extra fish for other things he needs can he afford to specialize in fishing; only if the baker can trade his surplus bread can he afford to build an oven and man it. The progress of economies can indeed be measured by the extent of the system of exchange.

In explaining the extraordinary productivity of capitalism, however, the anthropology of the potlatch impels us to focus not on the exchange mechanism (the market) but on the prior gift and its creation. It is not the exchange that elicits the goods and generates the increase in their value; it is the gift that evokes the desire to reciprocate and thus induces exchange. The gift comes first. Similarly, it is not the market that expands the division of labor. It is the process of invention and specialization—the production of new goods—that expands the market.

The anthropological evidence suggests that capitalism begins with the gift and continues with competitions in giving. These competitions succeed in generating new wealth largely to the extent that they are contests of *altruism*, defined as a regard for, or orientation toward, others (from the Latin *alter*, meaning other).

A gift will only elicit a greater response if it is based on an understanding of the needs of the recipient. Not everyone would react to the receipt, on his front lawn, of 16,000 coconuts—or of one swaybacked but very holy cow—by working obsessively to surpass it. As any perplexed recipient of expensive but horribly inappropriate Christmas offerings can attest, giving is difficult and requires close attention to the conditions of others' lives, their tastes and preferences, their existing possessions, their ambitions and goals.

The circle of giving (the profits of the economy) will grow as long as the gifts are consistently valued more by the receivers than by the givers. In deciding what new goods to assemble or create, the givers therefore must be willing to focus on the needs of others more than on their own. They must be willing to forgo their own immediate gratifications in order to produce goods of value to the beneficiaries. They must save before they can give. Without a monetary economy, such gifts could be seen as a necessary way to escape the constraints of barter, to obviate the exact coincidence of wants and values required by simple trading. The primitive entrepreneur became impatient with the tangled negotiations of exchange and



started simply donating his product. It worked. He had invented a form of capitalist investment, giving up his wealth in order to save it; parting with his goods in order to partake of a growing diversity of goods donated by his peers.

In investments, capitalists relinquish resources to others in the hope of surprising transformations, new goods and services, new value to be reinvested. One does not normally make gifts without some sense, possibly unconscious, that one will be rewarded, whether in this world or the next. Levi-Strauss speaks of the Law of Reciprocity; even the Biblical injunction affirms that the giver will be given unto. The essence of giving is not the absence of all expectation of return, but the lack of a predetermined return. Like gifts, capitalist investments are made without a predetermined return.

Contrary to the notions of Mauss and Levi-Strauss, the giving impulse in modern capitalism is no less prevalent and important—no less central to all creative and productive activity, no less crucial to the mutuality of culture and trust—than in a primitive tribe. The unending offerings of entrepreneurs, often over a period of profitless years, investing capital, creating products, building businesses, inventing jobs, accumulating inventories—all without any assurance that the enterprise will not fail—constitute a pattern of giving that dwarfs in extent and in essential generosity any primitive rite of exchange. Giving is the vital impulse and moral center of capitalism.

Capitalists are motivated not chiefly by their desire to consume wealth or indulge their appetites, but by the freedom and power to consummate their entrepreneurial ideas. Capitalists collectively save far more over their lifetime than they ever consume, as is shown by an increasing body of economic research. The life-cycle theory of savings—which sees the impulse of thrift as simply a desire for later consumption—is false. There is far more in the human psyche than a self-interested demand for goods and services, now or later.

Whether businessmen are piling up coconuts or designing new computers, they are movers and shakers, doers and givers, obsessed with positive visions of change and opportunity. They are men with an urge to understand and act, to master something and transform it, to work out a puzzle and profit from it, to figure out a part of nature and society and turn it to the common good. They are inventors and explorers, boosters and problem solvers; they take infinite pains and they strike fast.

Are they greedier than doctors or writers or professors of sociology or assistant secretaries of energy or commissars of wheat? Yes, their goals seem more mercenary. But this is only because money is their very means of production. Just as

the sociologist requires books and free time and the bureaucrat needs arbitrary power, the capitalist needs capital. It is no more sensible to begrudge the entrepreneur his profits—or ascribe them to overweening avarice—than to begrudge the writer or professor his free time and access to libraries and research aides, or the scientist his laboratory and assistants, or the doctor his power to prescribe medicines and perform surgery. Capitalists need capital to fulfill their role in launching and financing enterprise. Are they self-interested? Presumably. But the crucial fact about them is their deep interest and engagement in the world beyond themselves, impelled by their imagination, optimism, and faith.

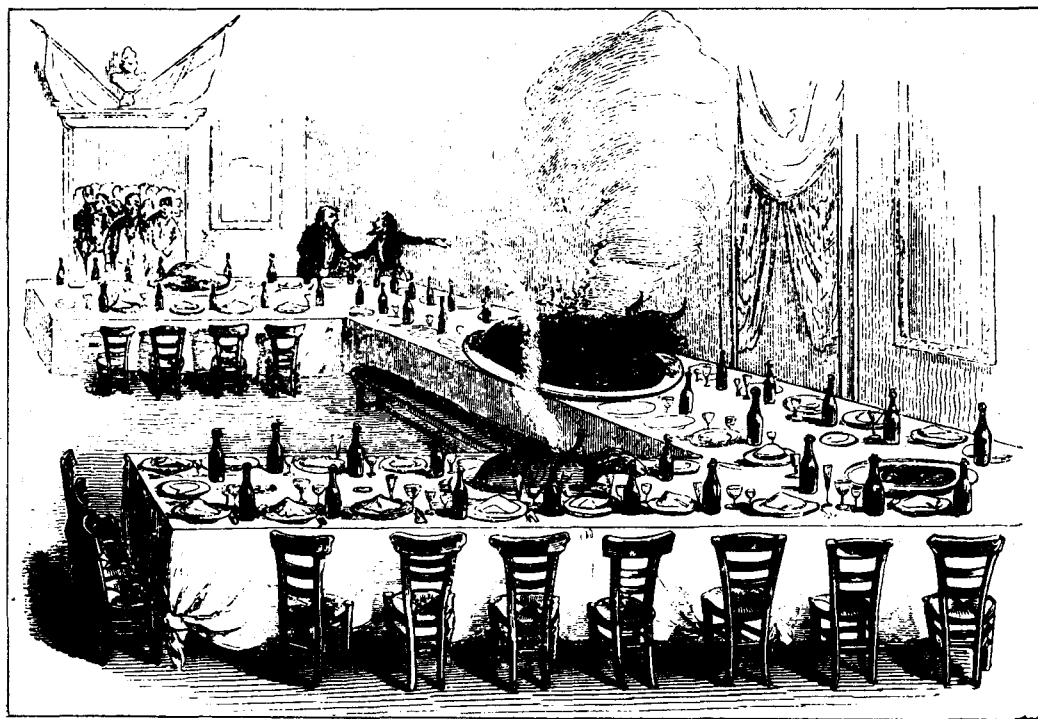
The rewards of capitalists, however, do not simply constitute a tribute to virtue or an accommodation for a particular style of professional life. Entrepreneurs must be allowed to retain wealth for the practical reason that only they, collectively, can possibly know where it should go, to whom it should be given. Successful capitalism confronts the potential investor, public or private, with millions of small companies (nearly 16 million in the U.S.), scores of thousands of them lurching forth with growth rates of between 20 and 40 percent and more, and suffering from crises of expansion and cash flow. It offers a vast Babel of business plans and projects presented by every form of fast-shuffling charlatan, business school tyro, flimflam artist, sleek financier, computer shark, shaggy boffin, statistical booster, every imaginable combination of managerial, marketing, engineering, and huckstering skills, all inscrutably mixed in a teeming marketplace of "investment opportunities": over-and-under-the-counter shares, Denver "penny stocks," Sub-Chapter-S corporations, limited partnerships, proprietorships, franchises, concessions, leveraged buyouts, leasebacks and carryforwards,

spreads and deals of every description.

The investor must appraise a vast traveling bazaar of new products, the overflow of a million garages and laboratories, hobby shops and machinery "skunk-works," companies all on the edge of "new breakthroughs," takeoff trajectories, unique product niches in the "fast-moving high-tech semioptical bioconductor floppy tacos field," firms offering fame and fortune and tax shelters, businesses providing low-cost fuel, high-margin fast-food, automatic profits in mail-order marketing, forty-seven magazines the world needs now, the Photonic Chip!, the people's airline, fourteen plausible cures for asthma, the perfect coffee cup, the new Elvis, all demanding huge infusions of instant capital, all continually bursting beyond the ken even of banks and experts, let alone government planners, regulators, and subsidizers, no matter if they bear such promising titles as Small Business Administration or National Enterprise Board. Governments are entirely and inevitably unable to master the baffling specificity and elusiveness of economic opportunity.

The flood of protean growth can be comprehended and sustained only by millions of individuals with access to disposable savings and deep involvement in the companies themselves—that is, by investors who have money of their own and who can share in and pass on the profits as they gain new knowledge and investment skills. Although the desire to consume is ubiquitous and plays a significant role in motivating all men, far more important in capitalism is the purposeful drive to understand the world and to create things: to generate wealth (value defined by others) and reinvest it in the continuing drama of human invention and progress.

The fatal problem of a system without accumulations of personal income and the possibility of large profits is not the lack of incentives but the lack of dynamism and flexibility. In a low-income-low-profit



system, small businesses cannot swiftly rise up to exploit new ideas, overcome their crises of growth or respond to the kaleidic changes in knowledge and opportunity that continually transpire. Generous and creative men cannot command the resources to expand their influence and foster new projects. Under a system of forced redistribution, aggressive or ambitious men gain their inevitable advantages not by giving but by taking; they earn their money and power only at the expense of others, by pursuing the zero-sum maneuvers of excessive government, financial finagling, sclerotic bureaucracy, and legal pettifoggery, or by retreating into the invisible arms of an overgrown system of public sumps and subsidies. It is capitalism that best combines the desire and ability to do good and create value with the resources to accomplish these goals.

This process, however, is not well understood. For some the problem begins with a misreading of Scripture: confusing the creation and investing of wealth with the seizing and hoarding of it. For most, the problem is a misunderstanding of the nature and role of giving in human society.

The conventional wisdom, whether liberal or conservative, free market or socialist, regards charity or generosity as essentially simple—just giving things away without calculation or continuing concern with their uses. The best giver is the anonymous donor of money or valuable things, while the investor is seen in the image of a Shylock extorting usurious gains from lending money, or a Scrooge exploiting workers to make sure profits. By this measure, a welfare system of direct money grants financed by anonymous taxpayers through the choices of their elected representatives can be the epitome of compassion and charity.

This vision captures an important truth. Welfare can enhance the voluntarism at the root of free economies. The effort to force work, like all attempts to predetermine returns by coercion or exploitation, is inimical to the spirit of giving on which capitalist growth depends. The reciprocity must be voluntary to succeed. The grasping or hoarding rich man is the antithesis of capitalism, not its epitome, more a feudal figure than a bourgeois one.

The investor must give his money, offer his goods, freely, depending on the voluntary willingness of others to respond with creative efforts of their own. To the extent that the capitalist allies himself with the government or uses other modes of force in an effort to predetermine outcomes, he is just another kind of socialist, sometimes termed a fascist, rather than an investor who makes his contributions in the hopes that others will want them and willingly work to earn them. Similarly, a society without welfare of any kind—a system like the Soviet Union or China that forces people to work on pain of starvation—is as hostile to the spirit of giving as a society that forces them to work at the point of a gun. Sensible levels of benefits are indeed generous and capitalistic since they relieve people of coercion and thus permit them freely to join the system of giving.

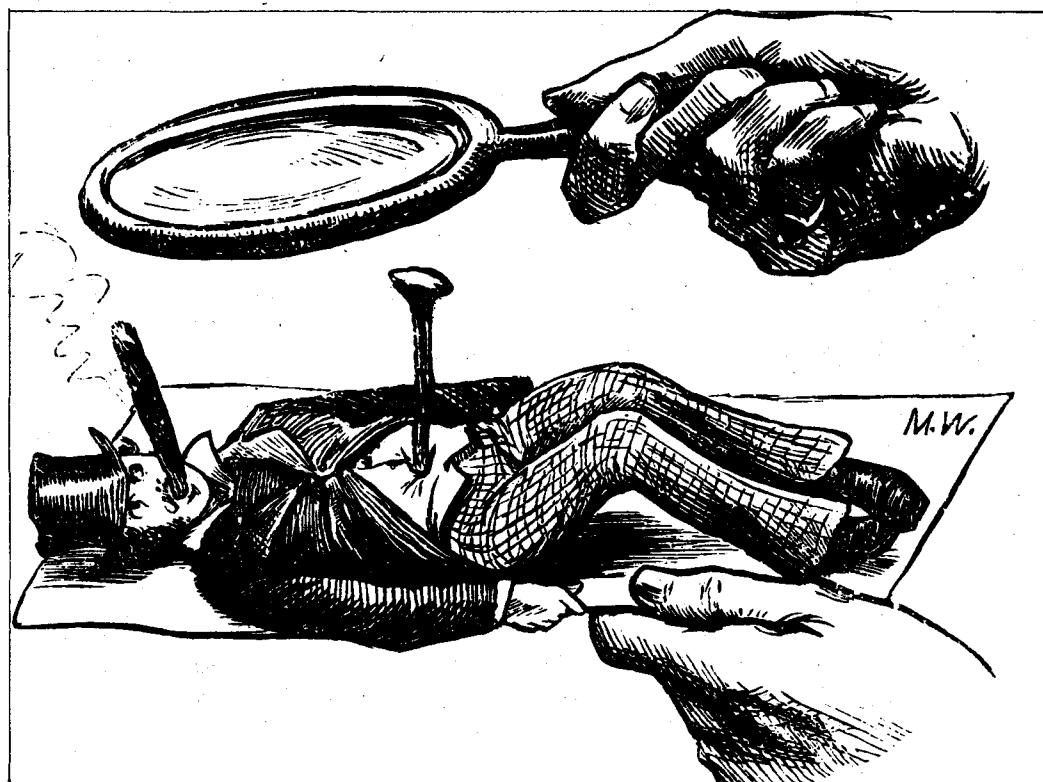
Nonetheless, welfare beyond a minimal level becomes deeply problematic. The fact is that it is extremely difficult to transfer value to people in a way that actually helps them. Excessive welfare hurts its recipients, demoralizing them or reducing them to an addictive dependency that can ruin their lives. The anonymous private donation may be a good thing in itself. As an example for others, it may foster an outgoing and generous spirit in the community. But as a rule of society it is best if the givers are given unto, if the givers seek some form of voluntary recipro-

cation. Then the spirit of giving spreads, and wealth tends to gravitate toward those who are most likely to give it back, most capable of using it for the benefit of others, toward those whose gifts evoke the greatest returns. Even the most indigent families will do better under a system of free enterprise and investment than under an excessively "compassionate" dole which asks no return. The understanding of the law of reciprocity, that one must supply in order to demand, save in order to invest, consider others in order to serve oneself, is crucial to all life in society.

Indeed, it is the very genius of capitalism that it recognizes the difficulty of successful giving, understands the hard work and sacrifice entailed by the mandate to help one's fellow men, and offers a practical way of living—a life of effective charity. True generosity is not soft or sentimental. It consists not of "give-aways" but of responsible giving. It has little to do with the often lazy "good works" of the gullible, all the protests and programs of "social change" and equality urged by the Left. Much of the world's most valuable, generous work comes from the labor and sacrifice of ordinary citizens, supporting their families, building small businesses, performing useful services, continually giving back their earnings in the practical cause of human betterment.

Capitalism transforms the gift impulse into a disciplined process of creative investment based on a continuing analysis of the needs of others. The investor cannot be fundamentally selfish. A truly self-centered capitalist will reject the very pattern of discipline and sacrifice, work and saving, that is indispensable to success. He will eschew the very initiatives—the risky but inspired ventures of innovation—that, being untested or unproven, depend most on an imaginative understanding of the world beyond himself and a generous and purposeful commitment to it.

All our recent history demonstrates that the so-called "me-generation" of egocentric men seek not the productive adventure of enterprise but the comfort and security of the welfare state, even if disguised in the form of protectionist tariffs, parity systems, or other invisible handouts. Libertarian authors of best-selling books on "looking out for number one" end up despairing for the future of the system, predicting depression and decline, and advocating withdrawal from productive investment. Rebelling against the perpetual dangers and uncertainties of engagement in capitalist enterprise, they urge purchases of art and collectibles, rural real estate and foreign retreats, guns and gold, in the always futile search for security in an inevitably insecure world. Even among exceptionally ambitious and committed men, self-love leads not to the giving of oneself and one's wealth to the realm of chance and fate, shaped by the decisions of



others in the market; rather, it leads to a quest for power over others, an effort to impose the fail-safe fantasies of radical politics.

Businessmen provide a continuing challenge both to men who refuse a practical engagement in the world, on the grounds that it is too dangerous or corrupt, and to men who demand power over others in the name of ideology or expertise, without first giving and risking their wealth. Capitalism offers nothing but frustrations and rebuffs to those who wish—because of claimed superiority of intelligence or birth, credentials or ideals—to get without giving, to take without risking, to profit without sacrifice, to be exalted without humbling themselves to meet the unruly demands of others, in an always perilous and unpredictable life.

It is not surprising, therefore, that the chief source of the incomprehension of capitalism is the intelligentsia, one of the many aristocracies which preen themselves on a contempt for bourgeois or "middle class" values and which refuse to acknowledge the paramount role of individual enterprise in the progress of the race. The disdain for businessmen is scarcely less common among thinkers on the Right than on the Left.

For socialists, however, this attitude poses no problem. They can feel free to denounce business and urge the dissolution of the business class. But this solution will not work for conservative, liberal, and libertarian theorists who understand the benefits of capitalism for the production of wealth and the promotion of freedom and democracy. Even though the conservative thinker often has little more respect for capitalists than the socialist does—variously regarding businessmen as vulgar, self-serving, stuffy, unrefined, unidealistic, amoral, and uninteresting compared with intellectuals—the conservative's ideology requires that he favor business. This conflict poses a genuine problem for conservative thought.

The dilemma was resolved, however, at the very beginning of the industrial revolution by the leading philosopher of classical liberal economics. Adam Smith was at once an intellectual who shared all the typical prejudices against the business class and a libertarian conservative who knew the value of freedom and enterprise. His solution was to locate the source of wealth not in the creative activities of businessmen but in the "invisible hand" of the market. Smith believed that capitalism worked not because of the virtues of capitalists but because of the "great machine" of exchange that converted their apparent greeds and vices into economic value.

Businessmen may be vulgar and avaricious, full of "childish vanities" and selfish indulgences, said Smith; "seldom do they gather but to conspire against the

public." But it was their very "self-love," their avarice, their desire for self-indulgence that impelled the growth of economies. "Not from benevolence," wrote Smith in his most famous lines, "do we expect bread from the baker . . . but from his self-love." In *The Theory of Moral Sentiments* he wrote that it is from the "luxury and caprice" of the rich man that we gain "that share of the necessities of life" which we "would in vain have expected from his humanity. . . . In spite of their natural selfishness and rapacity, though they mean only their own convenience, though the sole end which they propose from the labours of all the thousands they employ, be the gratification of their own vain and insatiable desires . . . they are led by an invisible hand . . . without intending it, without knowing it, to advance the interest of society."

In essence, Smith and his followers believe that the wealth of nations springs from a kind of Faustian pact: a deal with the devil through which humans gain wealth by giving in to greed and avarice. The selfish drive to better one's condition is seen as fueling what Smith describes as "a great, an immense machine" with "means adjusted with the nicest artifice to the ends which they are intended to produce": namely, the progress of human societies.

Such a vision, however, is unattractive to most religious or otherwise idealistic thinkers and simply unbelievable to the average man. It seems preposterous to most people to say that the way to create a good and bountiful society is to give maximum freedom to a group of predatory philistines. But to intellectuals this theory had the crucial advantage of praising capitalism without exalting capitalists. More important, it had a special appeal to many economists, attempting to reduce the productive behavior of men to a scientific

system. Economists could find in Smith's theory of self-interest an apparently safe and orderly, even mechanically predictable, core of calculation as the source of economic growth.

Not inspired and unruly entrepreneurs or rambunctiously creative businessmen govern the Smith machine, but a crude form of *homo economicus*, a utility-maximizing agent, calculating gains and losses, and galvanized by incentives for self-aggrandizement. Capitalism works, according to Smith, because it offers an effective and predictable system of rational incentives, an invisible hand of expanding markets.

Smith's error was to found his theory on the mechanism of market exchanges themselves rather than on the business activity that makes them possible and impels their growth. In a capitalist system, the exchange itself is indeed governed by computations of what might be termed self-interest, as the participants negotiate a price agreeable to each. But this self-interest has nothing to do with avarice; it merely reflects a mutual transfer of information, allowing an appropriate allocation of resources. Smith brilliantly demonstrated the marvels of such markets in optimizing the distribution of goods and reconciling the competing concepts of value in any economy. As Smith showed, this market process, based on morally neutral computations of advantage, is indeed an indispensable instrument for the creation of wealth.

Smith's analysis fails, however, because he subordinates a higher and more complex level of activity—the creation of value—to a lower level, its measurement and exchange. In his desire to found a Newtonian science of political economy, he inflates the instrumental mechanism of trading into a complete economic universe, in which there is little or no room for the unpredictable activities of free business-



men. In *The Wealth of Nations* Smith implies that in some possibly mystical way the market process precedes and subsumes the process of production—that entrepreneurial creativity is determined in some way by “the extent of the market” and reflects the same kind of self-interested rationality that governs the market itself. Man, however, not mechanism, is at the heart of capitalist growth. Although a marketplace may work mechanically, an economy is in no sense a great machine. The market provides only the routine climax, the perfunctory denouement, of a tempestuous drama, dominated by the incalculable creativity of entrepreneurs, making purposeful gifts without predetermined returns, launching enterprise into the always unknown future. Capitalism begins not with exchange but with giving.

The gifts of capitalism generate economic progress chiefly because they comprise an epistemological system: a way of making discoveries and exploiting them. Accompanying every visible profit earned by enterprise is an invisible profit of expanded knowledge. Investments are in fact purposeful experiments, and whatever the outcome the results are informative. Even the failures in a sense succeed and the much remarked “waste” of the system is often redeemed by the accumulation of information and experience, a crucial form of intangible capital, held by both the entrepreneurs themselves and by the society at large.

Information alone, though, cannot make the system grow. The successful enterprise imparts to the entrepreneur financial resources as well as knowledge. Capitalism is the most effective way of expanding wealth not chiefly because it offers the most powerful incentives, the most tanta-

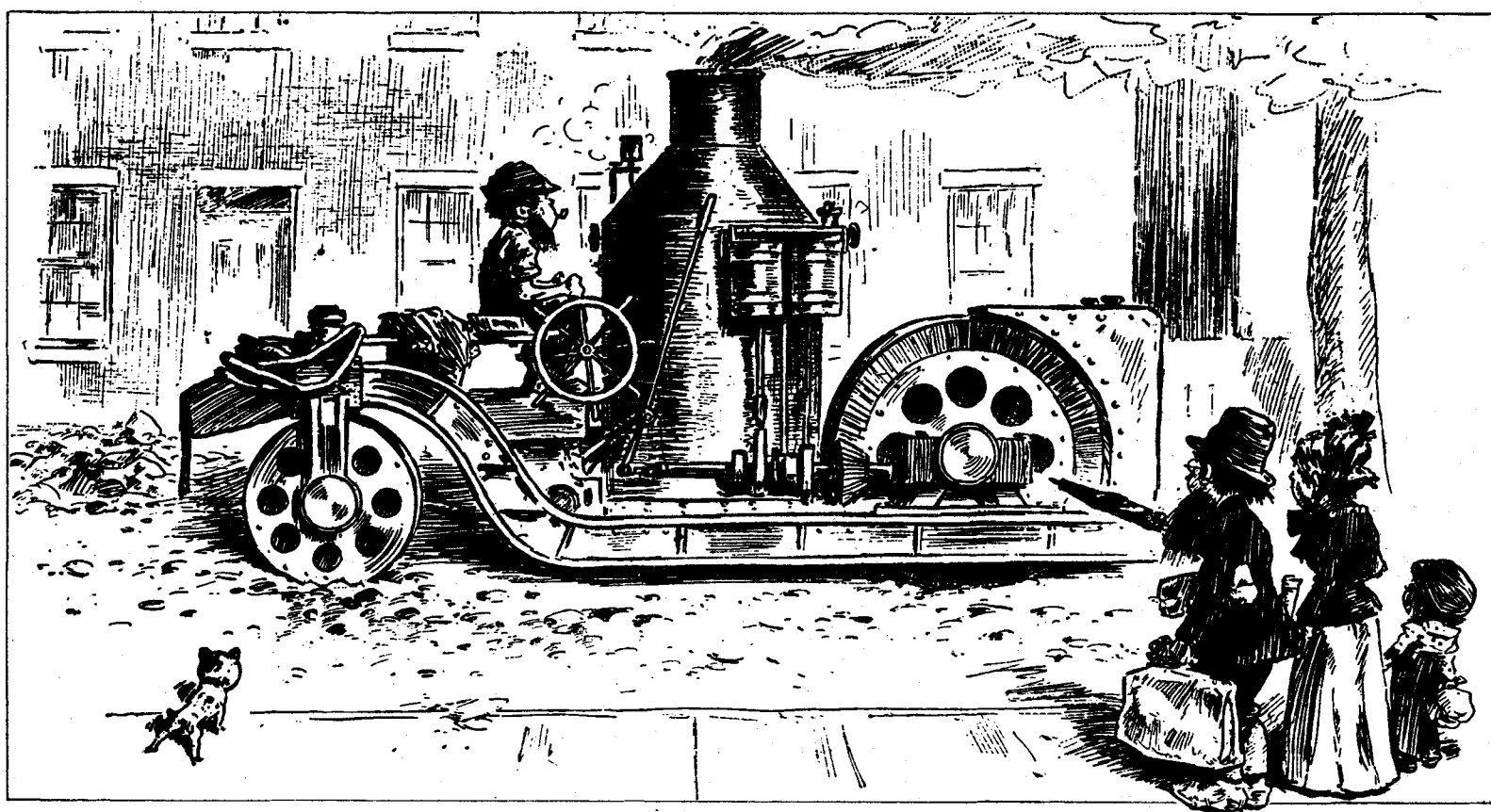
lizing arrangement of carrots and sticks, but because it links knowledge with power. It gives control over resources and over the future flow of investment not to political bureaucracies of certified experts or to the most avidly self-loving pursuers of leisure and luxury, but to the particular businessmen who manage successful experiments of enterprise. It grants riches to those very individuals who have proven their ability to forgo immediate gratifications in pursuit of larger goals, who refuse to waste or hedonistically consume their wealth. It assigns further power to those very people, whoever they may be, how ever unorthodox or uncredentialed, who launch successful projects and commit to them their lives and savings. Under capitalism, economic power flows not to the intellectual, who manipulates ideas and basks in their light, but to the man who gives himself to his ideas and tests them with his own wealth and work.

It is these capitalists, extending the division of labor by launching new goods and services, who expand the market, not the other way round. It is these often self-denying explorers beyond the bounds of the existing marketplace and its prevailing goods and services who extend the frontiers of human possibility, not some impersonal mechanism of exchange. The greatest damage inflicted by state systems of redistribution is not the “distortion of markets,” the “misallocation of resources,” or the “discoordination” of producers and consumers, but the deflation of capitalist energy, the repression of entrepreneurial ideas, and the stultification of wealth. Steeply “progressive” tax rates not only destroy incentives; more important, they destroy knowledge and subvert moral values. They take from the givers and thus prevent them from giving again, from reinvesting their winnings in

the light of the new information generated by the original gift.

Economies run not only on light but also on heat and energy, not merely on information but also on courage and skill. The crucial capital of the system is not the physical accumulation of natural resources and machines, but the metaphysical capital of ingenuity and faith. The Pope is perfectly right in denouncing materialism. Materialist indulgence is the perennial enemy—and temptation—of capitalism, particularly when confiscatory taxes balk the crucial processes of reinvestment and growth. It is not Reagan, however, but the Pope’s own socialist bishops seeking salvation through the redistribution of material wealth by the state who connive at the moral destruction of poor families in America in exchange for the pottage of an excessive dole. It is Catholic leaders proclaiming new “limits to growth” who betray the mandate of Providence and deny the infinite resources of mind. It is Church leaders condoning a mood of sexual hedonism, hostile to all familial continuities, who implicitly degrade the claims and rewards of the spirit.

The Pope is right in supporting a broad ownership of the multinational means of production, and he is right in denouncing the exploitation of the many by the few in a class society. But modern corporations, with their millions of free customers and shareholders—many of them workers with pension funds—diffuse the control and benefits of production more widely and concretely than any bureaucracy of socialism or UN agency. Most free systems now assign some 85 percent of income to labor, and comprise millions upon millions of small businesses. It is relatively small firms in free economies that have impelled



the vast increase in human wealth, and destroyed the class society, while class war persists virulently between bureaucrats and proletarians in every socialist state. If the Church is truly concerned with the material problem of world hunger and poverty, it should maintain a becoming modesty about its own mostly feckless efforts at distributing food (any multinational agribusiness, after all, far excels the Church in the physical nourishment of its sheep); and bishops should stop teaching the poor the absurd and disabling myth that their problem is the wealth of capitalists—and that the solution is stealing it from them (i.e., socialism). Instead, the Church should devote itself to its own spiritual and religious cause, upholding the laws of morality and faith, and thus redeem the most crucial conditions of capitalist giving and entrepreneurship.

The Pope, if he looked carefully, could see that the worldly society of his dreams is—in fact—capitalism. Although many capitalists fail to fulfill the essential values of the system, the problem of free economies is not the nature of their economics, but its corruption by a secular humanist and amoral culture. Capitalism is suffering from the increasing betrayal of its moral, spiritual, and religious foundations by churches and schools, priests and politicians, conservatives and liberals, who believe that the paramount laws of giving and faith are irrelevant to the great dreams of human creativity and production, science and art.

Yet, entrepreneurial activity is usually necessary to all practical compassion and charity, just as understanding and good will toward others is necessary to most entrepreneurial success. It is the capitalist

who renounces the zero-sum imagery of socialist planning—and the disguised egotism of "revolutionary" leadership—and asserts the golden rule that the good fortune of others is also one's own, that the expansion of trade always depends on the success, the trust, and the understanding of others.

Our problem, therefore, is a crisis not of economics but of religion and culture. All too many clerics have renounced the claims of the spirit in favor of inept ventures of materialism and social politics, thus depriving capitalism of its indispensable moral rules and roots, and spreading famine and poverty in the name of social justice. It is the Pontiff's own increasingly socialist flock—particularly its new contingent on the *New Republic*—that most needs to heed his warnings against materialism and unbelief. □

John Nollson

AIX-EN-PEKING

As everyone knows, almost everything useful—from noodles to gunpowder—was invented in China. The most valuable recent addition, however, is a new system for the spelling of English. This is the second time the Chinese have devised a way of doing it. Years ago, they had, in their ingenuity and sageliness, taken to spelling Joe as Chou and Dung as Teng although, for some strange reason, China was never pronounced Jina. In truth, English spelling was never much influenced by this ancient Chinese practice. Indeed, it mattered very little when the Chinese announced that, henceforth, the proper spelling of *Teng Hsiao-p'ing* was *Deng Xiaoping*. Or that *Chou En-lai* should be rendered *Zhou Enlai*. Or even that *Chiang Ch'ing* had become *Jiang Qing* (even though there were some who rejoiced that *Iraqi* was no longer the only word with a *q* in it that was not followed by a *u*).

But the trend toward interdependence is irreversible and, if people are to communicate with each other in an effective manner, some order has to be brought out of the chaos. This was first appreciated by the good citizens of Zhoplin, Missouri who, in a local referendum, voted to adopt China's pinyin system for the rendering of English. The movement spread quickly to Xikago, then to Qarlstun and, for all we know, may soon cross the Englix Qannel, though the Kwien's Englix is always resistant to change.

It is not surprising that the federal government has decided to leap on board

the bandwagon. Three months ago, the report of the White House Conference on Spelling was submitted to the President and, just three days ago, a well-connected Washington journalist filched a copy of a press release that is scheduled for release at the end of the month, its provisions to become effective on January 1, 1982:

The Huait Hauc

Pureisiduhnt Reigun ahnaunxed tudei that, az a sain ov gud feith, thuh Younaitid Suteits wud ahdahpt Qinah's pinyin xyctum fawr thuh raiting ov Englix.

"Thuh yuc of the pinyin xyctum opinc uhp nu pahcbilitiz fawr koahpureixun bitwin thuh Qines and thuh Ahmeirukun pipulz," thuh Pureisiduhnt's sopicmahn sehd. "Nau that aur tu pipulz hav disidehd tu render Englix ihn thuh seim wei, their ic no limit to thuh sutarizhik kansensuc we kan riq. Wi shud hav dun it lawng agau!"

Thuh Sekratehri ov Suteit cekundeht thuh Pureisiduhnt's thauts. "Naht sins wi disaidid tu ahdahpt thuh mehtrik xyctum hav wi bin so ihnternaxunuht in awr autluk.

Subsequent investigative reporting has uncovered the fact that this was an inspired leak. Typesetters and lexicographers from kohst to kohst have now been alerted that they must begin to prepare for the changeover. In fact, the White House

has already begun to prepare legislation which will empower the Administration to issue the necessary rules and regulations.

Given the historical dimensions of the President's decision, public reaction has been mixed, ranging from only mild skepticism to enthusiastic support; it all depends upon the direct effect on local communities. Qehvi Qeis, Maryland, will really feel the pinch, but in the state of Mein, folks will probably not even notice. As for Arkansaw, it is universally agreed that the new spelling is far more sensible. In Qina itself, the man in the street is delighted, and Richard Nixon issued his own warm endorsement from Saduhl River, Nu Jersi.

It is startling to discover that users of the Roman alphabet must turn to China in order to learn how to Romanize their native tongues. But the Western world cannot afford to be arrogant about it. If there be some vague intimation that the global balance of power is changing, so be it, for the key to the survival of any species is adaptability.

The President is surely correct, and it remains only for our leadership to be ratified by the remaining members of NATO. A common understanding of the true sounds of the vowels and consonants is necessary for the formulation of a common strategic doctrine.

Ix auk bihn ain Berliner.

Viv Duhgawl.

Qeerio. □



Robert W. Kagan

A RELIC OF THE NEW AGE: THE NATIONAL EDUCATION ASSOCIATION

Providing teachers with uncertifiable leadership.

The 1970s were a remarkable decade for the National Education Association. In that short period the 134-year-old teachers' professional association pulled itself out of a deep sleep and awoke as a giant of a union, with almost two million members, seemingly endless power, and a modern weapon: a political action committee of its very own. In 1972, NEA President Catherine Barrett declared, "We are the biggest potential political fighting force in this country and we are determined to control the direction of education." Awful as that may have sounded to some, the giant was just flexing its muscles. In 1978, after the NEA had dominated the previous Democratic National Convention by flooding it with NEA delegates, taken credit for the election of Jimmy Carter, and cashed it in for a Department of Education, NEA President John Ryor promised, "We will become the foremost political power in the nation." Executive Director Terry Herndon said the NEA's goal was nothing less than "to tap the legal, political, and economic powers of the U.S. Congress. We want leaders and staff with sufficient clout that they may roam the halls of Congress and collect votes to reorder the priorities of the United States of America." At last there seemed no limit to the NEA's power.

That, of course, was before the election of Ronald Reagan, before the ousting of the Democratic majority in the Senate, and before Americans had done some reordering of their own. Now, the NEA will be lucky to achieve even its more limited goals of 1972. The direction of education is certainly not under its control, at least not so far as its top legislative goals are concerned. The NEA wants the federal government to take over a third of education spending, but Reagan and the

Congress want to reduce the federal share from a little over eight percent to around seven percent. Like the AFL-CIO, the NEA wants national collective bargaining rights for teachers, but it won't get it from the present Administration. The NEA opposes tuition tax credits, but proposals still linger in the wings. The NEA's greatest prize, the Department of Education, is in jeopardy, but NEA leaders can barely decide which is worse: no Department of Education or a Department of Education under Ronald Reagan. As Terry Herndon said just before the election, "I would entertain the possibility that it would be easier to let the department go than to live with it under Reagan." Now that Reagan is in office, the NEA finds itself paddling upstream. The insider's place they enjoyed in the Carter Administration is, for the moment at least, a thing of the past.

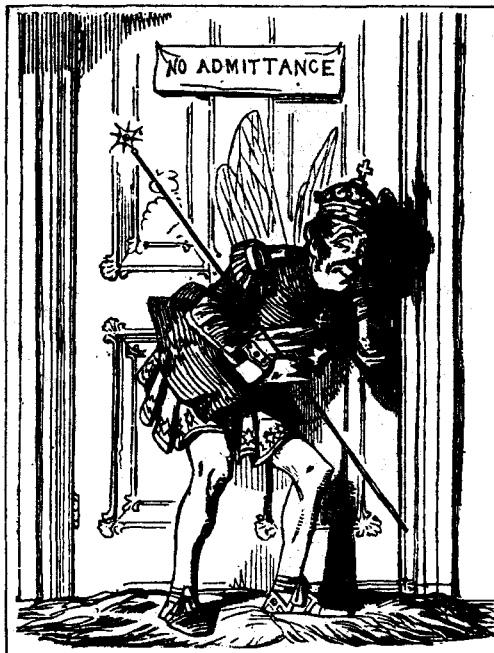
At its 119th Annual Convention last July, the NEA's leaders sounded the alarm. Terry Herndon declared the NEA to be in a state of emergency, but not because the American voters had rejected the association's programs and its Presidential candidate. "We have been whipped in the electoral process," he admitted, "but not

in the political disposition of the American people." The real enemy, he proclaimed, was the "New Right," which had somehow beaten the NEA to the punch in "tapping" the powers of Congress. His analysis of the political processes at work in the last election was unequivocal:

In sum, I say to you that a cohort of chronic tax resisters, congenital reactionaries, dangerous witch hunters, energized super-patriots, wayward dogma peddlers, and vitriolic race haters have coalesced into a sophisticated political force that has nearly overwhelmed a too comfortable and too stale progressive political movement.

Herndon's artful characterization of the enemy without, however useful it might have been in rallying the forces, ignored and masked some deeper problems that the NEA faces today. Not only did NEA leaders endorse the losing candidate in the last Presidential race, but they also suffered massive defections within their own membership. Despite the fact that the NEA officially endorsed Carter more than a year before the 1980 election and waged a Manichean campaign of propaganda depicting Ronald Reagan as the greatest enemy of education, largely because he opposed the Department of Education, and Jimmy Carter as the greatest friend, because he created it, nevertheless, almost half the NEA's members voted for Reagan. Politically, of course, the NEA's "teacher power," once thought by many to be the new, unstoppable force in national politics, had sustained a severe blow to its credibility. Teachers are still an important constituency in American politics, but politicians can no longer rely on the NEA to muster their support.

More important, however, the NEA vote in 1980 was a rebellion of sorts against the NEA leadership, a protest against the direction in which the NEA has been heading. Reagan's position on education was generally clear during the campaign: He opposed the Department of Education; he opposed increasing the role of the federal government in education; he opposed federally mandated bilingual education



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programs; he favored tuition tax credits; he opposed the Equal Rights Amendment. These were issues of primary import for the NEA leaders, and Reagan, in their view, was dead wrong on every single one. Yet, some three-quarters of a million NEA members voted for Reagan anyway. Can it be that they agreed with his positions on some of those issues?

The standard line in the NEA's Washington headquarters these days is that teachers don't think about their "personal self-interest" when they vote in Presidential elections. One NEA official, Sally Potter, speculates that those who voted for Reagan were probably thinking about the hostage issue, a disingenuous explanation to say the least. If teachers weren't thinking about education issues in 1980, what reason is there to think they were in 1976, when "teacher power" was supposed to have delivered the White House to Jimmy Carter and earned the NEA a very large favor? Perhaps they were thinking about the Nixon pardon. In any event, the NEA can't have it both ways. Either teachers do not vote with educational issues in mind, in which case the NEA's endorsement is and has been worth much less than its leaders claim; or, teachers do vote with educational issues in mind, a claim that the NEA had always passionately made until so many teachers went out and voted for Reagan. The latter assumption makes the most sense. Issues such as bilingual education, federal aid to education, and the Department of Education affect a teacher's livelihood in important ways. Why should a teacher be less likely to vote on these issues than a doctor on the issue of national health insurance or an auto worker on the question of tariffs? It's not their only concern, but it's important enough to play a role when they choose a President. It is surprising that a teachers' union should deny this.

But NEA leaders deny it because they don't want to admit that at least half their members disagree with their stands on a whole range of issues, both educational and non-educational. They don't want to admit that there is a growing rift between the increasingly conservative leanings of the NEA membership, as witnessed in the election, and the consistent liberal and left-wing policies formulated and carried out by the NEA hierarchy. In fact, this rift is not new. The NEA membership has never been a predominantly liberal group. A majority lives in traditionally conservative areas—the rural South, the Midwest, and the Southwest. (Those teaching in the traditionally liberal cities belong largely to the rival American Federation of Teachers.)* Between 40 and 50 percent of NEA members are Republicans (although, for some reason, the NEA refuses to release any such data on its membership), and a fair portion are probably conservative Democrats. As for the NEA leadership, Terry Herndon, executive director since 1973, bluntly describes himself as a

"left-wing Democrat," a political position which his fellow NEA leaders clearly share. During the 1970s, the differences of opinion between leaders and members were buried under the avalanche of the NEA's monumental political successes, but the NEA's failures in 1980 have exposed them to new light.

When the NEA decided to enter big-time politics, two critical changes occurred. One was the transfer of power from state affiliates to the national headquarters in Washington. The other was the increased role of the large permanent staff in that headquarters in making and carrying out NEA national policies. The permanent staff is very much beyond the control of the NEA's rank and file. Although the NEA boasts an 8,000-delegate Representative Assembly, which adopts resolutions and elects officers, its power is severely limited. It meets only once a year, and obviously cannot monitor the NEA staff to see that its wishes are carried out.

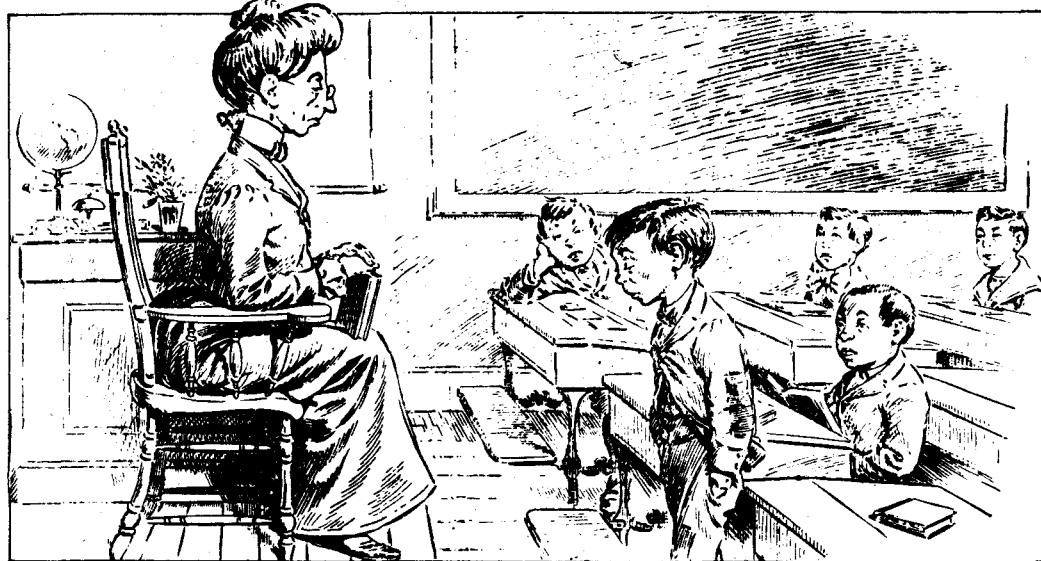
For a closer look at the essentially undemocratic workings of the NEA executive, consider its recent forays into the ideologically charged areas of nuclear energy and American policy toward El Salvador. Now, on nuclear energy, the NEA's official position has been that it has no position. The resolution adopted by the Representative Assembly says, "The Association supports establishment of education programs to increase public understanding of energy and alternative energy sources." The wording implies that the pronuclear faction in the NEA is as strong as the antinuclear faction. On March 28, 1981, however, the NEA co-sponsored a "March on Harrisburg," the theme of which, boldly printed across all the

posters, was "Keep Three-Mile Island Shut Down!" NEA President Willard McGuire defended NEA participation in this antinuclear demonstration by pointing to the "educational impact" it would have, but there was no hiding the fact that NEA leaders had acted on their own in joining a coalition against nuclear energy. They did so not only without the sanction of the Representative Assembly, but over the objection of the Pennsylvania state affiliate. Early in March, the Pennsylvania State Education Association, based in Harrisburg, demanded that the NEA withdraw its sponsorship of the "March on Harrisburg," but the demand was ignored.

Acting with similar independence, the NEA's Director of International Relations, Braulio Alonso, last spring sent out a collection of materials deploring American support for the Duarte government in El Salvador. Mr. Alonso, a former NEA president, claimed that Salvadoran teachers had been murdered by right-wing forces allied with the government, and that their union, ANDES, had been suppressed. In addition to sending these "educational" materials to local NEA affiliates, Alonso directed the NEA to co-sponsor a speaking tour in the United States by Tulio Mendoza, leader of the ANDES teachers' union and an opponent of the Salvadoran government. The chief sponsor of this tour was the Committee In Solidarity With the People of El Salvador, a group which, according to journalist Penn Kemble, "supports and openly campaigns for the guerrilla movement, the Democratic Revolutionary Front (FDR), which is fighting to overthrow the Duarte government" and has become "a mere auxiliary to the Marxist-Leninist command structure of the guerrilla army." At the time, the NEA's Representative Assembly had passed no resolution on El Salvador. Alonso had acted on his own judgment, and in an interview he justified his position as a defense of teachers throughout the world.

At its July convention, meanwhile, the Representative Assembly passed a resolution which accorded with Alonso's views after the fact. The resolution called for

*The AFT, led by Albert Shanker, has ironically been far more moderate than the NEA on most issues. Indeed, its position on defense, foreign policy, and nuclear energy have been downright conservative. This puzzling fact is most likely attributable to the powerful leadership of Mr. Shanker himself, whose ideology might be described these days as almost neo-conservative. For all that, there has been little evidence of discontent within the AFT membership.



"the immediate termination of all United States military aid and involvement in El Salvador" and directed the "NEA Board of Directors, the Committee on International Relations, the officers, and staff to actively oppose during 1981-82 any Executive actions, legislation, or appropriations by the Congress for United States military aid to the government of El Salvador." Surprisingly, this legislative amendment did not even mention Salvadoran teachers, the defense of whom is the typical justification for NEA pronouncements on American foreign policy. For instance, another resolution passed at the July convention was entitled "Education in Guatemala" and it employed the usual rhetoric: "The NEA supports the teachers and students of Guatemala in their pursuit of academic freedom and quality education," therefore, "The Association urges the federal government to deny all military and economic aid to Guatemala."

This concern for human rights, especially for teachers, would be more credible were it not so selectively applied. But of the over one hundred resolutions passed at the NEA's most recent convention, not one mentioned Poland, though unions throughout the world have expressed at least token support for Lech Walesa and his Solidarity movement. Not one mentioned Afghanistan, where presumably teachers, among others, have been deprived of their rights. Not one mentioned Cuba or the Soviet Union. In fact, the NEA's relations with the last two have been a source of conflict with the U.S. government. Since 1970, the NEA's International Relations Office, under Alonso's guidance, has conducted exchanges with the Educational and Scientific Workers Union of the USSR. Recently, the NEA tried to bring a similar teachers' "union" from Cuba to the United States,

but the American government has denied visas to all "representatives of purported labor organizations in countries where such organizations are in fact instruments of a totalitarian state." Needless to say, the NEA's Committee on International Relations has recommended that "at a later date, efforts should be made to repeal this legislation." When asked whether he thought that inviting teachers' "unions" from the Soviet Union and Cuba was a political statement that might lend legitimacy to their pretensions, Mr. Alonso replied that the question was "stupidly" worded and denied its implications.

The NEA leadership has an additional motive for acting independently in advancing its ideological concerns. One form of power politics in which most lobbying groups partake is called "coalition-building." In the "March on Harrisburg," for instance, McGuire was quite candid about the role that this political consideration played in the NEA's decision to co-sponsor the event over the objection of its state affiliate:

... in support of the United Mine Workers, the International Association of Machinists and other unions who support NEA's educational objectives in the U.S. Congress, the NEA has lent its name to the coalition of organizations which has organized the March 28 "March on Harrisburg," knowing well the educational impact of a demonstration which attracts the attention of the national media.

Many of the NEA's policies thus put it arm-in-arm with other liberal groups which together form a potent liberal coalition. Whatever the NEA's motives for acting this way, they certainly are not educational.

If we exclude its Washington leadership, the strongest forces in the NEA are

minority groups. In fact, the NEA is an example, in microcosm, of what society might look like if it pursued every imaginable affirmative action policy, instituted quota systems, and practiced consistent reverse discrimination. Indeed, the NEA had an outright quota system until it was forced to change its policies by the threat of legal action by the U.S. Department of Labor under the Landrum-Griffin Act. Now it simply refers to its quotas as "goals." The NEA constitution requires that "members from ethnic minorities shall comprise at least twenty percent" of the board of directors and of the executive committee. The NEA further demands that state delegations to the Representative Assembly have minority representation that at least equals the percentage of minorities in each state. Elections for these delegates, therefore, must be fixed to ensure proportional representation. And lest any state fail to comply, the NEA may refuse to seat its delegation at the assembly meeting.

In the Washington offices, moreover, there is a Committee on Minority Affairs "composed of four representatives of each of the following ethnic-minority membership groups: American Indian/Alaskan Native, Asian, Black, and Chicano-Hispanic." These "ethnic subcommittees," as the NEA calls them, are supposed to make sure that the goals for ethnic-minority representation are being followed, and to "provide minority input on NEA programs and policies" just in case the 20 percent minority quotas on the executive committee, on the board of directors, and the proportional, "at least," representation in the state delegations all fail to do so. Finally, under section four of the NEA constitution entitled "Ethnic-Minority Guarantee," there appears the following stipulation:

If after eleven (11) years no member of an ethnic-minority group has served as President, nominations at the subsequent Representative Assembly shall be restricted to members of such groups.

After 1983, the NEA has one more open election to look forward to.

There is also a Committee on Women's Concerns (even though women make up almost 70 percent of NEA membership) whose job it is to "evaluate the use and effect of Modules I and II of Leadership Training for Multicultural Sex Equity[!]" and to make recommendations to the NEA regarding women's issues "which include but are not limited to education, employment, legislation, and curriculum [emphasis added]." The NEA's highest non-educational priority has been the ratification of ERA, and the NEA has been in the forefront of the movement to eliminate "sex-stereotyping" from school curricula.

Incredibly, when the NEA handed out its Human and Civil Rights Awards for 1981,



recipients were designated by race. The official program for the evening's events had, under the names of recipients, the words "black" and "white" in parentheses. One result of such exaggerated concern with minority representation and minority "rights" has been to turn education policy in many cases into a vehicle for these causes. At the July convention, NEA delegates were presented with a handbook prepared for "Teacher Leaders" by the Human Relations Committee of the NEA's Minnesota affiliate. Under the heading "What is *Miseducation* of Third World People?" the handbook listed eleven circumstances whereby "Third World people are being miseducated." Number 2 was "Having a school where the special education classes . . . have a disproportionate number of Third World students"; Number 6 was "Having a school district where Third World students attend subscribe to the doctrines espoused by Jensen, Shockley, Moynihan, and other similarly harmful-to-human-being ideologies" (Moynihan?); and Number 9 was "Having a school district that determines its Third World students' intelligence by employing culturally biased tests."

On another page entitled "What I as an educator *must* know in order to deal effectively with negating the miseducation of Third World students," among the eight points listed were:

1. Acknowledge that the society in the United States is racist. Given that the educational system is a microcosm of the society, it, too, is racist.
2. Acknowledge that the educational system in the United States was not established to produce Third World people who are politically and economically salient [sic] and who also maintain a Third World consciousness.
3. Acknowledge that power concedes to nothing other than power superior to itself. (Remember, when you confront the system, the system will *deal* with you.)

Although not every NEA document takes this tone, of course, the ideology behind it has subtly influenced many of the NEA's educational policies.

In recent years, the NEA has had the distinction of being the only major education group in the country not to oppose the short-lived "Lau" regulations on bilingual education put forward by the Department of Education before President Reagan took office. These regulations would have given the Department extraordinary powers, by allowing it to force schools to hire uncertified bilingual teachers, while regular teachers were being retrained and certified bilingual teachers recruited; to specify how long students would have to remain in bilingual programs; and, to require schools to create programs that would demonstrate "respect for the culture and cultural heritage" of students with poor English.

Teachers opposed these regulations

largely because they did *not* want the federal government to tell them how to teach. Different programs work for different ethnic groups in different parts of the country, and Washington is no place to design these programs. Only a teacher can know whether a program is working for a particular student, or when a student is ready to leave it. Some educational leaders even wondered whether "respect" for the cultural heritage of students would have required Puerto Rican teachers to teach Puerto Rican students and Mexican teachers to teach Mexican students.

Teachers opposed to Lau were also worried about their jobs. With precipitous declines in student enrollment, the last thing teachers need is to compete for jobs with uncertified bilingual specialists. In short, the Lau regulations were inimical to teachers' interests, yet the NEA did not oppose them.

The NEA's strident opposition to standardized testing has been influenced by similar ideological and political considerations. Along with Ralph Nader, the NEA has led the fight against the testing industry and the use of so-called "norm-referenced" tests to judge student achievement. Terry Herndon describes standardized tests as "similar to narcotics" and compares the Educational Testing Service to "armaments manufacturers who say guns don't kill, people do." The NEA has waged a substantial propaganda campaign against testing, using posters showing a little girl with a giant tear running down her cheek. The headline reads "Yesterday, a bright child.—Today, 'below average.'"

The NEA's chief objections to testing are that (1) tests are damaging to a child's "self-concept"; (2) they discriminate, particularly against the poor and minorities, by employing a distinct cultural bias; and (3) they are used to evaluate teachers, which is unfair. According to the NEA, the

blame for declining test scores should be placed not on teachers, but on society as a whole.

Ralph Nader notwithstanding, the NEA has little support for its drive to abolish testing. To begin with, the American public favors testing overwhelmingly, and teachers themselves are severely divided on the issue. The half-million member AFT has vigorously opposed anti-testing legislation, and there is no reason to believe that NEA members are any more of a mind on this issue than on all other issues. In fact, in its nationwide poll of public school teachers, the NEA asked whether teachers preferred "criterion-referenced" tests, which the NEA favors, to the "norm-referenced" tests, which the NEA abhors. Thirty-four percent preferred criterion-referenced tests; 34 percent thought both kinds of tests were important; 24 percent preferred norm-referenced tests; and 9 percent had no opinion. In other words, 66 percent had no objection to the norm-referenced tests the NEA is trying to eliminate.

When asked what the greatest achievement of the NEA has been, its leaders invariably point, albeit with a shaky finger these days, to the Department of Education. It is a hollow monument to days past when NEA leaders could have their pictures taken with the President and claim to be the most powerful force in American education. What they overlooked, however, was how much more important getting the Department was to them than to NEA members. In its poll of public school teachers, the NEA found that 34 percent said the Department would have a positive impact on public education; 55 percent said it would have no impact; and 12 percent said it would have a negative impact. Responding to these figures, one NEA official said, "Most teachers aren't too aware of politics." But perhaps what he really should have been questioning is the political astuteness of the NEA's leadership itself.

Knowing in advance how much a new Department of Education would increase their clout, the NEA leaders gave this question their highest priority for four years. They endorsed Carter in 1979, on the very morning after he signed the legislation creating the Department—a full fourteen months before the election. It was an early sell-out, for Carter later cut the education budget by about \$1.6 billion. But the NEA remained silent! William Raspberry wrote: "Having cut the deal, the NEA can't bring itself to criticize Carter for the present budget disaster. . . . As a result, that 'strong voice for education' has been muted to a whisper just when a few well-placed screams might do the most good."

Representative John Ashbrook of Ohio has expressed concern that the teachers' union has put "power first, politics second, and education third." Although Ashbrook



is an inveterate critic of the NEA, the evidence strongly supports his claim. NEA leaders have stopped representing the interests of their members and of American education. They have taken every opportunity to advocate left-wing social programs which in no way reflect the views of their members. But, most important, they have been uncompromising in struggling to increase their own power at the expense of the power of the NEA rank and file.

What does all this mean for the future? The NEA is down, but it's not out. No union so large can fail to have influence. The Reagan Administration will not remain

in power forever, but there will always be teachers, and the NEA will still be their most powerful voice. The question is, then, can the NEA change? Will its leaders ever develop policies that conform to the wishes and best interests of teachers?

These are questions that NEA members should be asking themselves. Only they can remedy this problem, but it won't be easy. There are two fundamental truths about unions. One is that union members ask only one thing of their leaders: that they keep fighting for "more." The second is that pressures on union leaders invariably come from the Left. NEA members must overcome their passivity. They

showed their dissatisfaction by voting for Reagan and a more conservative Congress, even while they were paying for the campaign of his opponent with their union dues—and for pro-abortion lobbying, anti-defense spending lobbying, anti-nuclear energy lobbying, pro-bilingual education lobbying, anti-testing lobbying, and lobbying on a host of issues about which NEA members simply disagree with NEA leaders. So long as the NEA's ruling oligarchy is allowed to pursue its own political interests and advance its ideology, the NEA membership will never receive the kind of representation they need and American education deserves. □

Delba Winthrop

THE VOLUNTARY SPIRIT OF TOCQUEVILLE'S AMERICA

One hundred and fifty years after a famous journey, a reminder.

More than a century ago a Frenchman came to America and later wrote a book for his countrymen telling them what he had seen here. He told them that in America when a citizen saw a problem that needed solving, he would cross the street and talk to a neighbor about it and the first thing you know a committee would be formed and before long the problem would be solved.

"And then," he added, "you may not believe this but not a single bureaucrat would ever have been involved."

The Frenchman to whom President Reagan referred is, of course, Alexis de Tocqueville. With his friend Gustave de Beaumont, Tocqueville came to America a century and a half ago, disembarking at New York in May, 1831, and returning to France in February, 1832. The 26-year-old magistrate and candidate for a Golden Fleece Award had managed to obtain a commission from the French government to study the American penal system. The true reasons for his visit were to escape the political pressures endangering his career in the aftermath of the July Revolution of 1830 and to see "what a great republic is like." During their nine-month stay the travelers did see much of America: the staid intellectual lights of Boston; the decadent bibulous society of Baltimore; the intransigently indolent, though often impecunious, aristocrats of

the South; Eastern entrepreneurs and rough and ready Western adventurers; the "ladies of colour" of New Orleans; the civilized, half-civilized, and uncivilized dwellers at the last outpost of civilization at Saginaw, Michigan; the occupant of the White House, Andrew Jackson (whose state of civilization was a matter of some controversy). And several too many prisons. Having diligently practiced their English, they conversed as well as observed. Their breeding, their natural intelligence and curiosity, and their official letters of introduction—not to mention the "excessive" national pride of the Americans who perceived that these Europeans

wanted to learn something from them—gave Tocqueville and Beaumont immediate entrée into the best social, intellectual, political, and penal circles. The results of their journey, in addition to a more than perfunctory report on American penal theory and practice, were Beaumont's *Marie*, a novel with statistical appendices, now justly fallen into obscurity, and Tocqueville's still-celebrated, two-volume *Democracy in America*, published in 1835 and 1840.

I would be tempted to assert that Tocqueville could have written *Democracy in America* without ever having left his study in France were it not for a singular remark in the book:

It is not impossible to conceive the immense freedom enjoyed by the Americans, and one can also form an idea of their extreme equality; *but the political activity prevailing in the United States is something one could never understand unless one had seen it.* [emphasis added]

No sooner do you set foot on American soil than you find yourself in a sort of tumult; a confused clamor rises on every side, and a thousand voices are heard at once, each expressing some social requirements. All around you everything is on the move: here the people of a district are assembled to discuss the possibility of building a church; there they are busy choosing a representative; further on, the delegates of a district are hurrying to town to consult about some local improvements; elsewhere it's the village farmers who have left their furrows to discuss the plan for a road or a school. . . . And here is yet another gathering which regards drunkenness as the main source



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of ills in the state and has come to enter into a solemn undertaking to give an example of temperance.

Significantly, in this passage Tocqueville does not remark on another kind of activity he observed the Americans feverishly engaging in: the business of making money. More curious still is that there is no evidence that Tocqueville himself really did see the kind of political activity of which he writes here. Rather, it was described to him. He never saw a New England town meeting, much less the spontaneous formation of a committee of neighbors to remove an obstacle from the road. He learned of these things in the parlors and dining rooms of Boston from, most notably, a "Cambridge University" president, a Massachusetts state senator, and a German intellectual exiled for his liberalism. What Tocqueville saw in his travels were not America's best features, but many of her worst: not only the sordid business of crime and punishment, but the political successes of vulgar demagogues like Andrew Jackson and Davy Crockett (who were barely a cut above the Ohio politicians given to campaigning in taverns), and Indians lying on the road drunk from the white man's spirits, ignored by red man and white alike. Perhaps Tocqueville's countrymen could readily have believed these things of a democratic republic without seeing them. The fact remains that Tocqueville chose to write at length of a finer aspect of American democracy, what Reagan has called her spirit of "volunteerism." It also remains to understand what Tocqueville meant to teach the readers of *Democracy* by calling their attention to this spirit.

Tocqueville's notes of his journey suggest that he thought he had found the heart of the New World when he reached Ohio in December 1831:

In Ohio everyone has come to make money. No one has been born there; no one wants to stay there; there is not a *single* man of leisure, not a single speculative mind. Everyone has his work, to which he devotes himself ardently. . . .

Tocqueville had been warned while still aboard ship that the American vice was "avidity to get rich," and he noted this fact, if not its viciousness, when he recorded his first impressions, gleaned in New York, of American society. But Ohio was Sin City itself. America was constant change and seemingly perpetual motion, and Americans immersed in the flux tended to assume, not altogether unreasonably, that change was always for the better. Men changed careers as often as homes in their continuous push upward and westward. Builders built their ships to last for no more than a few years, not because they were incapable of building better, but because they expected them to be obsolete by then anyway. All were smitten with the promise of perfection or,

as Tocqueville reformulates it, the idea of the indefinite perfectibility of man.

The settler moving westward, Tocqueville was told, had no option but ardent devotion to work. Before the onset of his first winter he had to have a home built, fields cleared, and crops planted and harvested. And while land and wood were cheap, labor was dear. Thus, it seems the new arrival received no assistance he could not pay for. However admirable Tocqueville found the commercial spirit that animated the Americans—and he did learn to appreciate its tendency "to keep the mind in a sort of feverish agitation which wonderfully disposes it toward every type of exertion and keeps it . . . above the common level of humanity"—the avidity to get rich revealed its vicious aspect as well. There was virtually no society in the West; the adventurers populating it did not even know one another. Life at the frontier was both rugged and individualistic. Tocqueville was not convinced that rugged individualism would remain rugged, or that even if it did, individualism had much to do with human perfection.

However materialistic the Americans were, Tocqueville did not think them philosophic materialists. They were philosophic individualists. In response to a friend's query about his first impressions of American beliefs, Tocqueville ironically described the dogmas of republicanism and human perfectibility. The fundamental premise of the New World was that "the individual is the best and only judge of his own interest and that society has no right to direct his behavior unless it feels harmed by him or unless it needs his concurrence." The individual is to bow to no authority and submit to no judge; his judgment might be bettered, or perfected by enlightenment, but never bested. Moreover, since each individual judges his interest better than anyone else, all must

be considered equally good judges of some interest. From this assumption republicanism follows, though not simply logically; for the argument must be that since each individual can look after himself as well as the next and perhaps even well enough, matters of common or public concern are properly looked after by each individual in common, as if there were no difference between private and public matters. From the assumption can also follow, again somewhat illogically, what Tocqueville deems the "erroneous judgment" of individualism: that the sphere of one's own interest is very large, if not all-inclusive.

Individualism leads at best to grudging cooperation as necessity dictates. The western settler who fancied himself a self-sufficient whole could count on no more than having the wherewithal to buy the services of others as needed and on others' needing or desiring to sell their services. As Tocqueville anticipated and as contemporary radical critics of modern industrial society reiterate, the "voluntary" associations of economic man do not bind him to others or engender any enduring interest in their well-being. Since no spirit of camaraderie is likely to develop under such circumstances, individuals do not become accustomed to turning to one another in friendship when someone is in need. At the same time, the impersonality of modern corporations and government welfare bureaucracies (both of which Tocqueville clearly foresaw) makes it possible to acknowledge one's necessities without being humiliated, because one is not thereby made dependent on another citizen who is a theoretical equal. The assistance of a neighbor that is neither expected nor altogether welcome becomes as unnecessary as the virtue of generosity or charity. Thus an ever-increasing dependence is coupled with an illusion of continued freedom and dignity. Indeed,



today the citizen has a "right" to have his needs provided for by the government, and how better does he exhibit his freedom than by asserting his rights?

In Tocqueville's opinion, demanding or accepting the protection of such a government is hardly more dignified than praying to be the lucky beneficiary of the benevolence of an omniscient, omnipotent deity. Rather, freedom is acquired by enrolling in a political association, one of the "great free schools." Unlike economic associations, which are constituted only when citizens who think themselves on the whole self-sufficient "chance" to have a common interest, political associations are formed almost naturally, because no one can for a minute suppose himself self-sufficient in politics. Yet political associations are the voluntary associations that economic associations can only pretend to be. Personal risk is not as great as in economic ventures, so the freedom which is the benefit of these schools comes free of charge as well. And when striving "to make some political opinion triumph, to get some politician into government," any natural disinclination to working in common with others is overcome. Will or ambition is aroused and at the same time taught to submit to reason for the sake of a common end. The essence of a political association is passionate articulation and communication of a shared doctrine. One learns in these schools to convert individualism into partisanship and to connect self-interest to the interests of other selves by becoming interested in a cause.

Political associations unite the power of many weak individuals, thereby creating a

bulwark against the tyranny of one or of the majority. They accustom citizens to associating for ends other than political—industrial and commercial, moral and intellectual; and these "civil" associations mitigate bureaucratic despotism. But Tocqueville stresses that associations can do more than help secure liberty. They help preserve "several of the chief attributes of humanity," and civilization itself is said to depend on development of the "science of association."

The sole example in *Democracy* of an association for moral or intellectual ends is the temperance society. If Tocqueville thought that a temperance society of 100,000 members must be a joke (why not savor water's bouquet of self-righteousness in the privacy of one's own home?), we in turn might be rather amused at the suggestion that a temperance society is an intellectual association. But inebriation reminds us of the erroneous judgment of individualism, or of thinking of oneself as alone and complete in the world. An "individual" no less than a drunk is drunk with his sense of power. His failing can be said to be intellectual as well as moral. Common action is in fact necessary, and by refusing to act in common he not only shirks his responsibility to help meet man's immediate needs, but denies himself and the rest of mankind the perfection of capacities given him. His intellectual error lies in underestimating the importance in democracy of the "art" and "science" of association. Associations are humanly created artifices formed by neither immediate recognition of necessity nor mere habit. They require an act of will to create and sustain them and the choice of an end for which to associate. Because choice is essential, voluntary associations

are always moral and intellectual, or "political," in nature.

When Tocqueville described the "political" activity in America one must see to understand, he listed very diverse activities, which do, however, have one thing in common: In each case the real activity taking place, for whatever end, is speaking or deliberating in common. The art of association so effectively practiced by the Americans is the pursuit in common of the object of a common, or shared, desire. Deliberation about an object's pursuit often results in a refinement of desire. The science of association becomes possible when the full range of human sentiments and ideas is brought to light by associations. Then sober reflection on the variety of sentiments and ideas and a determination of which are worthy of pursuit become possible. Voluntary associations are necessary above all to reveal what human nature is and what is possible for it, so that all might see for what perfection to strive. "Feelings and ideas are renewed, the heart enlarged, and the understanding developed only by the reciprocal action of men one upon another."

Tocqueville may not have thought much of the planned obsolescence of American ships, and he did criticize as excessive the American faith in the indefinite perfectibility of man. But, undeniably, he was concerned with human excellence. Ultimately, he judged politics less with a view of justice and more to whether it precluded, promoted, or permitted human excellence of some sort. When he came to America he learned in friendly, sober conversation that the American proclivity to use voluntary associations was one of the few features of the political and social state of the New World that promoted the excellences enabling human beings to be free and proud of themselves.

President Reagan recalled Tocqueville's observation when he defended his proposal for further budget cuts, especially cuts in social programs. The President wanted to reassure liberals that there is an alternative to relying on government welfare bureaucracies to alleviate the plight of the unfortunate and elderly. He needed to remind conservatives and others that everyone has vital interests of his own in making the alternative work: not so much reduction of taxes, but preservation of a liberty threatened by administrative centralization and resuscitation of virtues suffocated by government paternalism. One does not have to be an advocate of Reagan's policies to grant that Tocqueville would have been pleased by the way Americans now remember him: as the Frenchman who visited America 150 years ago to appreciate what makes a republic great and who wrote a book to inspire and inform "the true friends of liberty and human dignity" with its image. □





THE TALKIES

ARCHDIOCESAN BLUES

by John Podhoretz

In *Going My Way* and *The Bells of St. Mary's*, Bing Crosby played Father O'Malley, an idealistic young priest who tended to give his aid to confused opera singers and equally confused nuns. Every woman he ever encountered fell in love with him (including the nuns), but O'Malley would have none of it. He reserved his passion for the altar; standing beside the crusty but lovable elderly priest Barry Fitzgerald, he would cast his eyes upward and croon Vespers.

These two movies were the great box-office triumphs of Hollywood's religious cinema, and in their crudity and sentimentality they represent a distillation of all those stomach-turning clichés: the yellow light suddenly streaming through the stained glass; the thousand-voice choir; the smile on the face of priest or rabbi infecting the faces of his congregants; the humorous sips at the flask carefully concealed under the altar robe. And, of course, the conversion of the stubborn unbeliever, who would be standing at the end of the greeting line at the end of the service. "Well," the unbeliever would say, "I guess I'll see you next week, Father. You put on a pretty good show." The priest would laugh, smile, and walk down the path in front of the church as the invisible choir burst out into an especially high-pitched hymn.

True Confessions, a new movie featuring Robert De Niro as Des Spellacy, a bureaucratic monsignor in the Archdiocese of Los Angeles in the 1940s, is a serious study of Catholicism and its demands upon its prelates. It begins with a wedding performed by De Niro; he goes through the service fluently but with an air of detachment and boredom. Des is overpowered by ennui, and his dispiritedness is matched by that of his brother Tom (Robert Duvall), an occasionally corrupt police detective. Tom seethes with an unspecialized

envy that explodes whenever he sees his more successful brother. Des, for his part, is made uncomfortable by Tom's presence, as though he fears Tom knows the truth about his crisis of faith.

In previous religious movies, the priest always appeared out of nowhere; he had no family ties to speak of. Life began anew for him, we are led to understand, when he entered the seminary. But *True Confessions* gives us a brilliant portrait of the ties that still exist between the one who became sanctified and the one who knew him when. Des is an important man in the religious bureaucracy, has learned to play golf and to eat in the best restaurants; Tom remains in the lower depths of their childhood, with the prostitutes and corrupt cops. When they meet, Tom reminds Des of the world from which he rose, while Des is a rebuke to Tom's failed expectations and hopes.

The plot concerns a murder Tom is investigating. Des, it turns out, is in some extremely vague way implicated in the murder. * This part of the movie is badly done; one has to have

*This is a point on which I am not all that certain. The girl who has been murdered is a prostitute; Des met her once; perhaps even meeting her was enough to implicate him.

read the novel by John Gregory Dunne upon which the movie is based to have any idea of what is going on. The movie gives short shrift to the plot and emphasizes the tortuous relations between the two brothers, and this, I think, is the key to the film's triumph. Apart from giving us a fascinating glimpse into the politics behind the altar, *True Confessions* delves as few films have into the relations between brother and brother.

De Niro is astonishing. His is a performance that relies more on what is unspoken than on what he says, more on how he carries himself than on his words. In one scene, the crooked Jack Amsterdam (Charles Durning), who builds schools for the Archdiocese at bargain rates (using substandard materiel), comes over to a table in a restaurant at which Tom and Des are sitting. "I used to work for you," Tom tells Amsterdam. "Really?" Amsterdam replies. "Yeah, I was your bagman when I was in the vice squad. I used to pass on the money from the whores." Amsterdam is furious; Tom smiles oddly, as though he is enjoying his own humiliation; Des sits absolutely still and expressionless, his eyes

darting from one man to the other, struggling not to react. Des is the perfectly stolid man; and so, when he can no longer make the connection between his administrative work and the clerical life, he has no way to express his own doubts. One sees his stride grow heavier, his mood darken; his eyes lose whatever brightness they had. This is all De Niro's acting, and, after years of screaming on screen, he proves himself an extraordinarily subtle actor.

Duvall, as Tom, is less good, but is still wonderful. His passion in life is to see his brother laid low; he perhaps does not know that this is what Des needs—and wants.

One truly wonderful scene: Tom and Des go together to see their elderly, senile mother in a nursing home. She does not quite recognize Tom, but Des she knows well, and kisses his ring. Des looks over at Tom and suppresses a laugh; Tom does laugh, and for a moment, they are boys again. In the car on the way home, Tom asks Des—to whom he feels close again—if he wants to go "do something." Des says he would like to, but has to look at his appointment book. The mood of camaraderie is broken.

In making a movie about the struggles of faith, the director Ulu Grosbard and the scenarists John Gregory Dunne and Joan Didion have given us a clearer, more honest view of the American religious life than any of its more conventionally religious predecessors. At times it has some of the spirit of the greatest religious film, *The Nun's Story*; just as faith was the most important and the most impossible thing for Audrey Hepburn's Belgian missionary, so too is this the case for De Niro's Des Spellacy. After the murder is solved in *True Confessions*, and Des's unimportant role in it revealed, he is sent in disgrace to a church in the desert outside Los Angeles. We see him there thirty years later; his inner reserve has been replaced by contentment. And, at last, he is able to make peace with his still-disappointed brother Tom. □



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THE PUBLIC POLICY

THE ARGOT OF THE WASHINGTON SWINDLE

by Anthony Tortora

Polemical purposes are often well served by confusing language. Consider the case of "tax expenditures," a phrase that is boggling to the mind and beloved by liberals. What, really, does it mean?

To define it neutrally and simply, the phrase "tax expenditure" refers to money not collected by the federal government, either as a result of deductions against (or exclusions from) taxable income; or as a result of direct credits against the income tax liability itself. It is money which the government never possessed and to which, under existing law, it never had a legal entitlement. But it has been transformed into an "expenditure" by the (controversial) observation that the federal deficit is increased equally by a dollar uncollected as it is by a dollar actually spent. (I say controversial because it depends on static assumptions about the future.)

The concept of "tax expenditures" is not a new one. People like Michael Harrington and Ralph Nader have been focusing on them for years as a potential source of additional government revenue. Liberals see the elimination of tax deductions as a useful tool with which to fight the dismantling of the welfare state. Following the November 1980 election, liberals realize that the welfare state must be defended in unconventional ways, using the language of its adversaries (i.e., "cut spending").

This is a novel situation for conservatives. In the past, it is they who have always had to struggle against the force of a rhetorical initiative possessed by the Left. Thus, a graduated income tax was almost uniformly called "progressive"; dividend and interest income were characterized as "unearned"; a substantial portion of the social engineering program of liberalism was blessed with the name of "civil rights" or of "civil liberties." But the

new conventional wisdom is that spending must be cut. Liberals are afraid to defy this presumption, so they have thought up a way to go on increasing revenues—which is what they want—while at the same time dressing up the revenue increase as an "expenditure cut"—a cut in tax expenditures.

Hobart Rowen, in the *Washington Post* of March 19, 1981, referred to a meeting of OMB Director Stockman with reporters in which Stockman was bearded for "the Reagan Administration's failure to deal with 'tax expenditures' that swell the federal deficit." Rowen then added, "Tax expenditures are subsidies, up and down the income scale." As we shall see, this is downright misleading.

The *Post* itself followed up a couple of weeks later, in an editorial on April 3, 1981. There it didn't even bother with placing the phrase "tax expenditures" in quotation marks. The editorial was titled "The Other Kind of Spending" and asserted, without qualification, "There's one kind of expenditure that the administration budget cutters have carefully avoided—the tax expenditure."

The *New York Times*, marching in step, in an editorial on April 17, referred to certain tax breaks as "hidden subsidies." And it is not merely to existing tax benefits that this kind of misleading language is applied. Who has not heard the proposed tuition tax credits condemned as "subsidies" for parochial schools?

To subsume initially under the word "expenditure" the quite different categories of money not collected and money actually spent, and then in due course to drop the qualifying quotation marks, is to signal the progress of obfuscation. Even further progress is made when the loaded terminology moves from the orthodox liberal segments of opinion and insinuates itself into the language of the Republican Senator from Kansas, Nancy Kassebaum. In an April 15, 1981 column in the *Washington Star*, Senator Kassebaum, while making a persuasive case for a careful review of virtually all forms of tax relief, nevertheless advanced arguments replete with the terminological improprieties of the "tax expenditure" genre. Next year, she advised us, we

will have "a 14 percent tax expenditure increase," and, she said, "by 1986 tax expenditures will have doubled to \$465.3 billion from \$228 billion in 1981." "It is time we recognize this spending for what it is and take action to keep things from getting worse," she added.

On the contrary, I believe it is time to demonstrate the falsity of the idea that what is called a tax expenditure is spending or, more specifically, a subsidy. Most people would think it clearly absurd to speak of a man in the highest tax bracket (70 percent until January 1982) as having received a subsidy of 30 cents on each dollar. Yet this is the premise underlying the notion that any reduction of one's tax liability involves a subsidy. The premise does, however, unmask the statist assumption that one's income is properly the government's to dispose of; any portion you are allowed to keep is a benefaction from the state or, perhaps, a "subsidy." This notion is also to be seen in the discussion of the supposed unfairness of a tax reduction of uniform percentage because, by this reasoning, the government is "giving" more to the better-off.

The potential elaboration of this kind of reasoning is truly awful. Consider, for example, the letter of William Vickrey, Professor of Economy at Columbia, to the *New York Times* on April 27, 1981, in which the professor inveighs against the "subsidy" to homeowners embedded in the income tax. He states that the "main element in this subsidy consists of the failure to include in taxable income the income in kind [i.e., the amount at which the home could be rented] enjoyed by the homeowner from his . . . home." Furthermore, it would be a mistake to believe that Prof. Vickrey's view that imputed income should be taxed is peculiar to him; it is more the typical than the eccentric view among those who treat tax reductions as subsidies.

But there are other distinctions between tax reductions and subsi-



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dies, of which two should be noted. First, in order to secure a tax reduction, as opposed to a subsidy, there must be an actual payment by the taxpayer, or the assumption of a liability. Second, "tax expenditures" are invariably focused on what Congress has determined to be a desirable social objective, whereas subsidies frequently entail no more than an increase in discretionary income to the recipient.

These distinctions warrant elaboration because, as wordsmiths constantly remind us, careless use of the language is both a symptom of and an aid to slipshod thinking. An earlier confusion, for instance, surrounded the use of the egregiously misleading term "loopholes," with its suggestion that tax benefits are due to congressional oversight rather than congressional intent. The broadening realization that such tax deductions and credits had explicit legal sanction perhaps led to the substitution of the more confusing and less clearly erroneous phrase "tax expenditures" for "tax loopholes."

In the present case we can also, perhaps, see certain ironies in the predominantly liberal assault on specified tax reductions when those most generously conceived seem designed to offset the harmful effects of other liberal programs, or to work in concert with such liberal programs.

Of these, perhaps the foremost is the much-used tax shelter involving special treatment for investment in low-income housing projects. The prime lure of this kind of investment is that it permits taxpayers to take depreciation on properties even if the taxpayer has no personal liability on money borrowed to finance the acquisition. Thus, for example, a taxpayer who purchases a property costing one million dollars by using \$100,000 of his own money and \$900,000 of mortgage money, can amortize the full one million even if the lender's only security is the mortgaged property itself, with no recourse to the personal assets of the borrower.

This so-called "non-recourse loan," a powerful inducement to invest, was virtually eliminated by the widespread assault on tax shelters codified by PL 94-455, popularly known as the Tax Reform Act of 1976. It remains available to low-income housing projects but is expressly prohibited to (for example) such things as oil and gas exploration. This reveals the extent to which substantial tax advantages have been designed to service the broad welfare purposes of the federal government. It is remarkable that in the Congress-

sional Budget Office's extensive review of the "cost" of tax expenditures, this most popular and widely sold tax shelter went unmentioned. (Note, incidentally, that tax reductions in the parlance of liberalism always "cost" the federal government something. They never "save" the taxpayer anything.)

Similarly revealing are a few examples of the tax advantages avail-

able to businesses. Tax credits are especially important, because they are the most powerful of tax "expenditures"; they reduce tax liability directly, whereas deductions merely reduce the income base on which tax is assessed. Take, for example, the Work Incentive Program (WIN) tax credit. This is a federal program established in 1967 to provide welfare recipients with training and job op-

portunities to help them become economically independent; a laudable objective, to which end the WIN credit provides a reduction of the employer's corporate tax liability, the credit being based upon a (varying) percentage of the wages paid to WIN-eligible employees.

Another kind of tax credit, available as an alternative to the WIN credit, is the "targeted jobs credit."

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Among the beneficiaries of this are handicapped people, broad classes of the economically hard-pressed, youth in qualified cooperative education programs, and certain ex-convicts (felonies only). Both these credits effectively reduce the cost of employing certain workers. Without special inducements of this kind some people within these enumerated categories would not be hired at the legal minimum wage. These tax benefits, therefore, are designed at least in part to offset the unemployment

caused by minimum wage laws.

A final irony may be noted in the way an argument, once ill-defined, tends to fall back on itself. Sen. Kassebaum wrote, "they [i.e., corporations] will claim a huge amount of exemptions this year . . . expense account deductions, equipment deductions, etc." When suspect *deductions* begin to include something so ordinary and necessary to the running of a business as the expenditure

for equipment, then the argument is proceeding, at least implicitly, away from a tax assessed on net income to a tax assessed on gross income. Since "loopholes" and "tax expenditures" are suspect, this argument says in effect, let's eliminate even more of them, including equipment expenses. Assess tax on income without any reductions therefrom. In other words, tax the gross. Though a tax assessed on gross income has many virtues, not the least of which is simplicity, it is striking in its kinship to a national

sales tax which liberals invariably describe as "regressive."

All of these points still may not persuade us that language is being distorted to serve certain political objectives. But a final argument may be useful—a *reductio ad absurdum*. If we accept the contention that specified tax reductions are expenditures, does anyone then believe that we will have "cut spending" if we take steps to increase tax collections by another \$465 billion in 1986? I think not. □



SUPPLY-SIDE AND OTHER SCARCITIES

by Fred Barnes

Folks in Washington these days aren't exactly stampeding forward to secure a public reputation as partisans of supply-side economics. After President Reagan, Congressman Jack Kemp, and Paul Craig Roberts of the Treasury Department, the supply-side ranks, never swollen, grow woefully thin. And small wonder.

Credit the *Washington Post* with at least a measure of responsibility for this phenomenon. Washington is a one-paper town now, and the *Post* has taken upon itself the task of discrediting the supply-side approach. Indeed, the entire Reagan economic program often seems to have been targeted—not by the editorial writers, but by the reporters. The coverage has been so one-sided that it's easy to remember the stories that have been even-handed or perhaps favorable to supply-side economics, there having been so few of them. But I have lost count of the gloom-and-doom stories reporting that the recession is sure to be "deeper than expected." Or the victimology pieces about the suffering under the budget cuts. Or the accounts of a not-so-new dimension of the essential inequity of the supply-side tax cuts.

Oh, well, that's just the way the *Post* always is, you say. Not really, though. The *Post* is fairer on most issues than conservatives are usually willing to acknowledge, and its op-ed page is brimming with right-wing columnists. But on supply-side economics, its sense of fairness and,

sometimes, its penchant for accuracy have vanished.

Last October, for example, Dan Balz reported from Minnesota that "a three-year experiment in supply-side economics here has left the Republicans in a shambles and the once dispirited Democratic Farmer Labor Party has its confidence back." True, Republican Governor Albert Quie's prospects for re-election in 1982 aren't great, but it is not because of "the tax revolution" that Balz blames Quie for instituting. Tax revolution? Quie managed to index the state tax system, and later he boosted the sales tax. That hardly qualifies as a revolution, much less as supply-side economics. To portray the Minnesota case as a true supply-side test is at best an exaggeration, at worst a full-blown inaccuracy.

In November, with only a fraction of the Reagan tax cut in place, Caroline Atkinson's analysis on "Supply Side: Is the Bubble Bursting?" appeared on the front page of the *Post*. Naturally, the implication was that supply-side economics was failing badly. Called on to render a negative verdict were three critics of supply-side, economists Herbert Stein, Rudolph Penner, and William Nordhaus. No supply-siders were quoted, and the critics, even a ferocious one like Stein, were not identified as opponents.

There is more. In December, the *Post* quoted Janet Norwood, the commissioner of the Bureau of Labor Statistics, to the effect that "the economic downturn is widespread." It ignored her testimony that unem-

ployment was at a six-year high mainly because it had never receded fully from earlier recessions and that the pattern of joblessness in the current recession more closely resembled the start of the mild 1980 slump than the disastrous 1974-75 recession. Like other papers, the *Post* reported on Budget Director David Stockman's comment in the *Atlantic Monthly* that the Kemp-Roth tax cut of 30 percent over three years was "always a Trojan horse to bring down the top rate"—without mentioning that liberal Democrats had first formally proposed to drop the top rate in a single swoop.

Oddly, one of the most telling economic pieces in the *Post* was a favorable one. What was odd was the byline—political reporter David Broder. "While Democrats are crowing these days over Ronald Reagan's problems with the economy, some influential voices are warning them to watch out; it's entirely possible that Republican fortunes will be rosy again in time for the 1982 congressional elections," Broder wrote. "The political warnings are coming from economic forecasters, some of them long identified with the Democratic party," he said. "The nation, they agree, is in economic recession right now, but they predict a strong recovery in the second half of next year (1982), perhaps vibrant enough to make voters feel good again about the Reagan economic recovery program." Broder, as fair-minded a reporter as you'll ever find, was enlisted to write the story because none of the regulars on the economics

beat were willing. The thought that supply-side economics might succeed, even temporarily, probably never occurred to them.

• • •

Nothing promotes the suspension of skepticism among normally quite cynical reporters like an environmental scare. The newest one, with appropriate Malthusian overtones, is that highways and urban sprawl are gobbling up America's "prime farmland" at a clip that threatens trouble in food production by around 2000.

The source of this scare is the National Agricultural Lands Study, published a year ago. It warned that the United States is losing about 3 million acres of farmland annually to development, and it predicted that "by the year 2000 most, if not all, of the nation's 540-million-acre cropland base is likely to be in cultivation." This trend, the study said, raises "some very serious long-term risks."

For on-the-scene coverage of the vanishing farmlands, the *New York Times* dispatched a correspondent to Greeley, Colorado, then to Garden City, Kansas. And to his shock, the reporter found that the farmers selling off their land were not concerned a whit about the looming environmental crisis. In Greeley, "Lawrence Hertzke is not at all apologetic about the 500 acres he sold for housing tracts." In Garden City, the county commissioners were proud of "choosing the benefits of urban growth over preserving the farmland. And since good agricul-

Fred Barnes is National Political Reporter for the Baltimore Sun.

tural land is converted in chunks of 40 acres here and 400 there over periods of days, months or years, what is happening here is an indication of how the choice of short-term gain over possible long-term consequence has created a national problem."

Well, maybe there really is a national farmlands problem. But it would be fitting if reporters considered claims of one with the same skepticism with which they approach assertions, say, of Soviet involvement in the Caribbean or Russian spies in Washington. And perhaps they would discover that Julian Simon is correct in dismissing the disappearing farmlands threat as another environmental canard.

Simon, in his intriguing book *The Ultimate Resource*,* says that environmental hysterics fail to take into account "the key idea that land is man-made, just like other inputs to farm production. . . . Though the stock of usable land seems fixed at any moment, it is constantly being increased—at a rapid rate in many cases—by the clearing of new land or reclamation of wasteland." Simon says "flatly no" to the question of whether population growth means too much land is being paved over. "The amount of recreational land is increasing at a rapid clip and new agricultural land is being made as some older land goes out of cultivation, leaving a very satisfactory net result for our agricultural future." So there.

...

Remember the Crippled Presidency? As recently as a year ago, there was handwringing galore on editorial pages and in tony publications like *Foreign Policy* about the inability of Presidents to accomplish anything, confronted as they are with mighty interest groups and a recalcitrant Congress. Lloyd-Cutler, the counsel to President Carter, wrote of a "general rule of stalemate" that barred Presidents "from reaching their goals." British journalist Godfrey Hodgson, in his well-reviewed *All Things to All Men*,† posited that "never has so powerful a leader been so impotent to do what he wants to do, what he is pledged to do, what he is expected to do and what he knows he must do." The weak Presidency was not Jimmy Carter's fault; it was inevitable.

Now that we know the Presidency is about as hobbled as Herschel Walker, where are all the scribes to

correct the record? Surprisingly, there is one, Mark Shields, the liberal columnist, television commentator, and wit. Shields noted in his column that "Ronald Reagan has radically changed the public perception of the office he now holds." A year ago, "Americans were being told by many of their leaders that our problems were probably beyond our control and our comprehension and that perma-

nent presidential-congressional stalemate would be the future norm. If Ronald Reagan heard those pronouncements, he did not heed them. Since he has been president, both problems and the president's actions are rarely described as 'intractable.'

"Reagan clearly believes, as most of us grew up believing, that one man can make a difference," Shields said. "His administration has probably

eliminated unintentionally most seminars on the Declining Presidency or the Modern Presidency's Crippled Structural Defects. My own personal indicator on how well any president is doing, at any particular time, is the incidence of newspaper and magazine articles advocating the single term of six years for all presidents. That proposal . . . is usually advanced by supporters of an un-

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successful president. It always makes it easier when the fault is institutional rather than individual."

...

In the annals of trenchant skewerings of the pretensions of the press, Tom Wolfe ranks high. In a fleeting passage in *The Right Stuff*, he characterized the press as "the consummate hypocritical Victorian gent. Sentiments that one scarcely gives a second thought to in one's

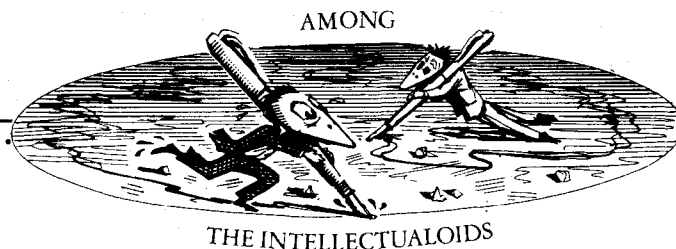
private life are nevertheless insisted upon in all public utterances. (And this grave gent lives on in excellent health.)"

As fresh evidence of the gent's robust health, I submit the *Wall Street Journal* piece by Albert Hunt that took umbrage at the conduct of the Senate's 16 freshman Republicans. "It can be said that the Republican newcomers have contributed their votes," Hunt wrote. "Their deportment is another matter. . . . There is little evidence to sug-

gest that this year's new Republicans as a group are cultivating a favorable public image." To be sure, the gang of 16 is an unruly crew with yahoo tendencies. But Hunt scolds some of them for expressing sentiments in public that might be quite innocuous if voiced in private.

Lots of people have doubts about sex education films for schoolchildren, but Senator Jeremiah Denton of Alabama was gauche enough to show such a film to other senators. Tut, tut, senator. New York Senator

Alfonse D'Amato's faux pas consisted of admitting to a magazine writer that the anti-abortion lobby has pressured him into supporting a bill outlawing all abortions. My, my. And Senator Paula Hawkins of Florida committed the unforgivable act of palpably hungering after publicity to the degree that she upstaged a colleague. Horrors. Thanks to Hunt we are kept abreast of such revolting conduct. So to him goes the Victorian gent's medal with oak leaf cluster. □



THE NATION'S FLAPJAW

by John S. Peterson

Friday night, the Roosevelt Hotel. The agenda was political and, of course, stacked far to the Left. This was not surprising given *Nation* editor Victor Navasky's source of inspiration. The idea of a congress had bubbled through his mind while reading accounts of the thirties' writers' congresses run by the Communist Party. As I listened to the keynote address in the Grand Ballroom it was obvious that the liturgy hadn't changed much. Huge capitalist publishing conglomerates were apparently ganging up to crush and silence the little writer, the person who cared. "We are toys, things to be played with by little kings . . . who dismiss us . . ." hissed Toni Morrison, Random House editor and four-time novelist, a black female who last spring made the cover of *Newsweek*.

Morrison called upon the brothers and sisters to begin thinking collectively. In fact, it was time to organize. "We don't need any more writers as solitary heroes," the Random House editor proclaimed. "We need a heroic writers' movement!" She had been preceded on the dais by an intellectual from a Havana intellectuals' conference, and by a couple of home-grown old-timers. Studs Terkel of Chicago introduced 80-year-old Meridel LeSueur who remembered it all—Eugene Debs, the Wobblies, the Palmer raids, Sacco and Vanzetti, the glorious writers' congresses—in a

flood of loom and furrow imagery . . . "our tender and fearless hearts . . . alive in the solidarity of communal love." Afterwards, a *Washington Post* reporter found it all a bit quaint: "I mean, when is the last time you heard Engels quoted at a writers' conference?"

Unfortunately, New York's largest literary cocktail party did not live up to its potential. To begin with, although the list of inviting sponsors comprised a Who's Who of American literary liberals, even before the congress convened, a number of its brightest and richest stars were expressing doubts. This was especially true of the fictionists. As quoted in the *Soho News*, E.L. Doctorow hadn't seemed particularly anxious to rap with the cranks—"Writers love to talk about their problems, but if this turns into a general complaint session, it will be a bust." William Styron struck an elitist note—"I'm not against unions, but I think it's a far cry between mine workers and writers." Arthur Schlesinger, Jr., sent his regrets. Having been pilloried in the *Nation* for 20 years, Arthur felt it would require "masochism of the highest order" for him to join the party now. The motives of the other non-attending big names seemed fairly obvious. Who wanted to be subjected to political harangues while being hit for change and deluged with manuscripts? Better to lend one's name as a sponsor than to mix with the radical hoi polloi one had helped to create. Besides, one probably had some writing to do.

And so, in the end it came down to Gay Talese and Kurt Vonnegut, both men moving like royalty in a swarm of reporters and cameramen. Talese looked dapper and none the worse for having spent the seventies in massage parlors and sex institutes. Vonnegut look to be, well, confused. In mid-evening, I crossed paths with the *Washington Post* man and asked, "How's Vonnegut?" He grinned and shook his head. "Not lucid, not lucid." The moving spirits of the congress, the radical politicians, seemed to be caucusing and furiously writing resolutions for Sunday's plenary session. Their liberal elders, the mid-rank authors and critics who would lead the panel discussions, had either gone home or were out dining with friends. That left the working press, and, so far as I could see, a couple of hundred very solemn Doonesburys.

The stray cavalier turned out to be Alice K. Turner, the *Playboy* fiction editor. She sized up my *American Spectator* name tag, chuckled, and from that point on took great delight in warning people about The Right. She wanted to see me lynched, I think, and had it been someone else, a *Mother Jones* editor say, I probably wouldn't have minded. Anything to shake the Doonesburys out of their morbid self-absorption. It used to be said, by Galbraith I believe, that the Left has more fun. This is no longer true. Something has gone out of the literary Left. Its fun side—the pranks and Whitmanesque bohós—has disappeared. All have been neutered and turned into respectable nine-to-

five humanists scrambling to become creative writers-in-residence. No, not a fun party. The beer ran out at 10:30.

Saturday morning. Between Friday and Sunday the congress ran a series of mini-talk shows designed to boost consciousness and illuminate the crisis facing the American writer. Twenty minutes into the first one—The Writer in American Society. . . . "What, at bottom, are we doing when we write?"—I gave up all attempt at keeping a coherent set of notes. The Great Big Concepts were simply too much. Still, this panel and others afforded many glimpses into the tortured liberal psyche. Consider, for example, Marcus Raskin, the co-founder of the Institute for Policy Studies. "Freedom is something you do with others," Raskin intoned, gathering us round, ". . . though not in lockstep, certainly not in lockstep."

I had hoped to attend Language as Ideology—"Do our metaphors reflect an impulse to colonize or liberate?"—but found the doors blocked. Poor planning and the participatory crush of true believers had forced the Nation Institute to close panels and shift part of the show to Town Hall. Deciding to shift with it, I stopped in a coffee shop on the walk to West 43rd Street and fell into conversation with a delegate who had made her writing her identity, she said, her life. Although unpublished, she would support any organization that supported writers, including a union, which might help her become pub-

John S. Peterson is a child-care worker and writer living in New York City.

lished. Up in the cashier's line a young delegate complained of being censored and therefore rejected by the mainstream press. Maybe if the *New Yorker* rotated its editors each month, I suggested. He laughed and replied, "Who cares about the *New Yorker*, I'm talking about *Mother Jones*, that's where the assholes are."

Eros, Language, and Pornography shaped up as a battle between the civil libertarians and the Women Against Pornography. One could feel the sisterhood, with its curious double standard, gearing up to shriek at the ACLU man. Feeling restless, I left for another panel, thereby missing the moment when a pornographer announced that the current demand was for stuff depicting female dominance.

In Droit Morale ("Writers and Creative Control") I experienced something akin to liberal panic. As Judge Arnold Fein droned on about a case of deleted footnotes, I realized that life was passing me by. Already I had missed out on book wars and local censorship, new directions in black literature, whatever happened to the labor press, and homophobia at the *New York Times*. A smorgasbord of angst, with more to come—writers and social responsibility, writers and technology, the politics of "cultural amnesia," and how can gay and lesbian writers get taken seriously?

The day was going blurry, and so I retreated to the hotel bar to sober up. Scanning the evening program—Native American Poetry Readings, An Evening with Silenced Korean Writers—I realized that I could no longer keep pace. I lingered at the bar and became drawn into conversation with a pair of courtly septuagenarians. I discovered that the American Writers Congress was sharing the hotel with the Quiet Birdmen, a group of barnstorming pilots from the twenties and thirties. Listening to their yarns, I began to suspect that I'd fallen in among the last real American bohos. The Quiet Birdmen could also drink pretty hard. At 7:30, I went home to take a nap.

Sunday morning. The keynote panel featured another round on Ideology, the concern this time being Truth and Self-Censorship. Should cultural workers tell the truth or remain silent when the truth conflicted with the need for Movement solidarity? As the ball got rolling there seemed to be a degree of tension among the women over some things that moderator Barbara Grizuti Harrison had written in the October 3 *Nation*. "No enemies on

the left. I can't think of anything more damaging—to the left—than this bit of moral idiocy." Beginning with the antiwar crowd who refused to sign petitions of protest to the North Vietnamese, Harrison had gone on to rake gently a number of the Left's more hallowed solidarity-ites, including a critic who had accused Betty Friedan of giving comfort to the Moral Majority. ("What nonsense.")

Slouched and brooding in a front-row seat was Ellen Willis, radical feminist-in-residence at the *Village Voice*, member of "No More Nice Girls" feminist group, and author of perhaps the murkiest sentence in the history of English prose. ("Good writing is counterrevolutionary.") Willis was also the very critic whom Harrison had accused of accusing Betty Friedan of giving comfort to the

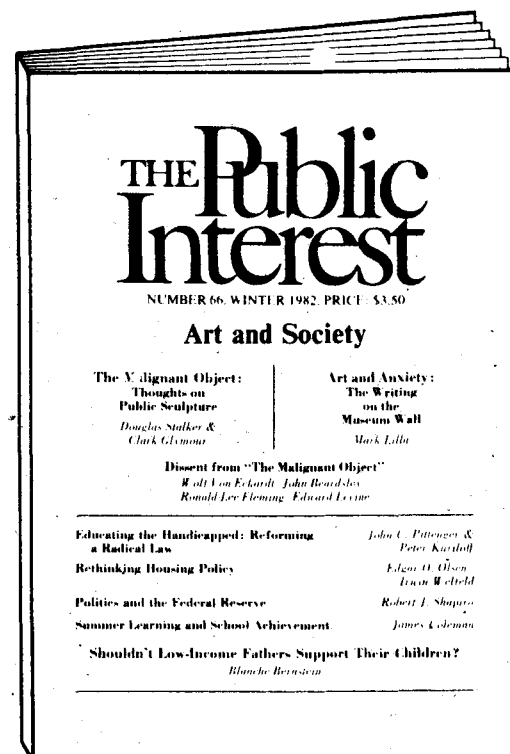
enemy. On just that point, Willis stalked to the mike in a bit of a Stalinist funk. As she did, a number of people edged forward in their chairs, myself included. Here was to be a moment of crackling dialectic. Had Harrison read Friedan's book?, Willis demanded. No, as a matter of fact, Harrison had not read the book. Hmm. Problems. Plus, a couple of male panelists who had been waiting

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The section opens with Douglas Stalker's and Clark Glymour's article, **The Malignant Object**. They argue that when government commissions art for permanent public display, it pays little or no heed to public taste or preferences, but is instead guided by ideological judgments it has no right to impose. Invited to respond to the Stalker-Glymour argument, four other critics and scholars present a lively range of dissenting opinion: Wolf von Eckardt, John Beardsley, Ronald Lee Fleming, and Edward Levine.

The closing contribution in the "Art and Society" section is Mark Lilla's **Art and Anxiety**. Lilla examines the phenomenon of the contemporary American "new brow." Affluent, leisured, product of a generation of mass higher education, the "new brow" is not only a voracious consumer of high culture, but also a fearfully insecure one where artistic knowledge, taste, and perception are concerned. What is the future of the arts, Lilla speculates, in a society whose audience for painting, sculpture, and music is increasingly dominated by these uncertain, anxiety-ridden aesthetes?

The remaining six articles in the Winter 1982 issue deal with such other timely subjects as: Federal housing policy; public education for the handicapped; public welfare assistance to families of absentee fathers; and the reliability of methods for measuring learning among schoolchildren. You will read, for example:

Shouldn't Low Income Fathers Support Their Children? Since 1975, when enabling legislation took effect, the dollar amounts of child support collected from absent fathers of families on welfare

*Issue July 1, 1979; page 1

have greatly increased everywhere in the nation—except in New York City. Why this exception? Blanche Bernstein, former administrator of the City's Human Resources Administration, charges that the leadership of the entrenched municipal social welfare bureaucracy and most Family Court judges are openly hostile to the law that authorizes such collections, and refuse to cooperate with or implement it.

Educating the Handicapped. John C. Pittenger and Peter Kuriloff spotlight the workings and results to date of the "Education for All Handicapped Children Act." Has it been a "bill of rights" for America's handicapped children, as its sponsors claim? Or has it been, as some critics assert, a largely unworkable monument to the power of the handicapped lobby, saddling school districts with exorbitant costs and cumbersome legal and administrative burdens?

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AS

patiently to be introduced. Later on, Willis would request a session with Harrison. With a sigh, Harrison would go—no doubt wishing she'd read the goddam book.

How the Culture Industry Shapes the Culture. Let's see. Murray Kempton introduced Arthur Miller who lamented the crushing power of the *New York Times* drama critic. Film writer Walter Bernstein spoke

of Hollywood arrogance and the tendency of studio heads to refer to writers' fees as "schmuck money." (According to a member of the Writers Guild, "schmuck money" these days runs to \$9,000 for a 24-page, double-spaced, 30-minute script.) The most interesting moment, however, came when poet Mary Ellen Washington raised the question of illiteracy among black children. The

fact that fewer black kids were learning to read had caused her to question her presence at a writers' congress of prestigious white liberals. There followed a moment of silence.

Throughout the day, the questions from the floor were a better gauge of the congress's mentality than the panel discussions. The panelists, after all, represented America's tenured and credentialed literary elite. These

people were not as silly, many of them, as the talk show format and program notes made them appear. Nor did all of them share the Nation Institute's sense of impending doom. For example, John Simon. As Simon traced the descent of film criticism from Judith Crist to Rex Reed, one failed to detect the slightest whine. On the contrary, whatever his qualms about Clive Barnes, Simon seemed perfectly at ease with America. The delegates, however, were a different story. They shared the Nation Institute's sense of doom and then some. All weekend they had trooped to the audience mike in the Grand Ballroom to pour out their hearts. After the final panel—The Tastemakers: Critics as Cultural Czars—a young woman stood up and rolled all the questions into one. "Is there any hope for us?"

The answer depended of course on what she, the delegates, and the writers' congress were really after. Was it politics? Although Toni Morrison had called them to the barricades, and Meridel LeSueur had spoonfed them Engels and Waldo Frank, the delegates didn't seem to take the radical rhetoric any more seriously than they had in the sixties. Perhaps their hearts were with the Third World, but their bodies, safe and comfortable in the States, would call the shots. In hosting the writers' congress, patrician Hamilton Fish, the *Nation* publisher, was living about as dangerously as he ever would. Watching him amble around in chinos and safari jacket made me recall a line from a Warren Zevon rock tune—"Send lawyers, guns, and money, Dad get me out of this . . ." Watching the chic young women bustle about in designer jeans made it hard to believe that anyone wanted the status quo seriously disturbed. Least of all the women.

Then, was it writers and writing? Not really. As *Newsweek's* Peter Prescott was to discover, in mixing with the delegates it was difficult to find one who had actually published a book, or even an article, or sometimes even anything at all. Clearly, aside from the panelists, the "nuts and bolts" writers' issues applied only to a few, and one of the most important of these hadn't even been invited. Norman Spinrad, president of the Science Fiction Writers of America, based in New York, representing 600 published authors, carrying a "model contract" based on a prototype created by Robert Heinlein, was furious at not having been notified, much less included in congress planning.

Over the weekend the gathering acquired a kind of Jonathan Living-

Campus and the Corporation

There are growing grounds for concern about the health and vitality of higher education in America. Public and private universities face troubled futures rooted in fiscal uncertainties that strike at the heart of the educational mission.

Budgets and endowments are being ravaged by inflation. Faculty salary scales are under pressure; pay dropped by 20% in constant dollars during the last decade. Enrollments are on the decline, particularly in graduate studies. Bright young people are turning away from academic careers. With their budgets squeezed, universities are deferring needed maintenance. They are stinting on books for their libraries and instruments for their labs.

All this threatens the continued quality of on-campus teaching, scholarship, inquiry, innovation, and research: functions vital to the underpinnings of knowledge in our democratic society.

Take basic research, or the search for knowledge that enables us to do more things in better ways. At least 60% of all the basic research in the U.S. is done by universities. On-campus research and development in 1979 exceeded \$5 billion in value, and more than \$3.5 billion of the total represented basic research, as distinct from applied research and engineering development.

The U.S. government has been the principal sponsor of basic research at universities. However, government support has been weakening in recent years. One measure of hope is the increasing involvement of the business community in supporting university research and in contributing in other ways to the strengthen-

ing of higher education.

Still, there's large room for growth in corporate help for education. "Business has gained a clearer understanding of the role of the universities and the value of free inquiry," notes the Committee for Corporate Support of Private Universities. "One result is a substantial increase in business support of higher education — measured in inflated dollars. But in constant dollars, it has risen only marginally." What's especially disturbing is that many corporations give little or nothing to higher education.

Inducing more companies to support higher education is the task taken on by the Boston-based committee. It is not a fund-raising agency. Rather, it is an advocate, an exhorter, working to foster closer relationships between campus and the corporation.

Corporations turn to the campus for the talented, trained people they need. They draw on the ideas and innovations that flow from university scholarship and research. So business has a direct self-interest in getting closer to the higher education community, finding out what the needs are, and helping to fill them. There are many ways to help: direct research grants, capital contributions, matching employees' gifts to universities, fellowships for young teacher-scholars, cooperative projects in teaching and research.

Increasing ties of understanding and support are being formed between business and education. Such links are mutually valuable. They serve both institutions, along with the broad public interest. They should be multiplied and strengthened.



ston Seagull momentum. Heading into the big plenary session one could sense some generational chickens coming home to roost. If the *Nation* writers' congress had any significance, this was probably it. A number of yesteryear's Kids had failed to establish themselves as writers or grab a slice of the liberal socio-cultural pie while the getting was good. Sad to say, their causes were no longer in vogue. America had sampled them, swallowed as much as it could digest, and moved on.

The plenary session quickly degenerated into a predictable piece of McGovernite theatre. Early on a delegate pleaded with the congress to get its act together—"There are

people outside this room who are going to laugh at us!" Five hours later—as the delegates geared up to pass a resolution urging the U.S. Congress to provide guns and money to South African revolutionaries—a man in the balcony began dimming the lights in hopes that everyone would go home. As he did, a cameraman screamed an obscenity and cried, "Hey, that's censorship!" The congress did, however, manage to approve the idea of a union and agree to meet the next morning to tidy up.

Monday morning, The New School. More of the same egalitarian participatorian goo. A band of hard-

core faithful shouted back and forth in an attempt to elect an executive committee before the New School took its auditorium back. As the thing petered out I found myself standing next to Alexander Cockburn, ideologue-in-chief at the *Village Voice*. Cockburn glanced at my *American Spectator* name tag and remarked, "This must be a pretty glitzy assignment for you." He went on to reflect that the way the South African resolution was worded, he couldn't even travel there to denounce the place. Someone please add the *Village Voice* to the oppressed list.

Tuesday afternoon, at the corner of Broadway and West 110th Street.

Stepping out of my apartment I spotted Jimmy Breslin in the street. Spruced up in a suit, puffing a fine cigar, studying a script of some kind, Breslin looked like a true prince of the city. When asked about the American Writers Congress, he pulled out the cigar and gazed off into the distance. "Well, I'm not against unions, but I don't think it will work. . . . See, writing a book is such an individual thing. . . . It starts with a guy sitting down at a typewriter on one end and ends with a guy sitting down to read it on the other. . . . Of course, writing is a lonely business, and I can see how some people might want a crowd around. . . . But I don't think it will work." Enough. Give the last word to Breslin. □

SPECIAL

C O R R E S P O N D E N C E

Galbraith Unhooked

I read Sidney Hook on John Kenneth Galbraith (*The American Spectator*, October 1981), and it is as if Bella Abzug were writing about Jackie O. Hook is not altogether wrong, and I can easily imagine Bella Abzug saying things about Jackie Onassis that would be largely correct: for example, that Jackie is not a feminist. There would be nothing wrong with that, unless Mrs. A. would go on to say that this is where the former Mrs. K.'s consciousness is wanting, that this is where she is naive and innocent, and that this is the most significant thing about her. Now this is exactly what Professor Hook, who is a philosopher who knows very little about human nature, does. He writes that when it comes to Communism Galbraith is an innocent, and that this is the *most significant* element in his memoirs. Hook cannot comprehend that Galbraith's politics have very little to do with innocence or ignorance. In reality, Galbraith is as innocent about Communism as, say, Woody Allen is about publicity. He is a master opportunist, his political preferences having sprung from that condition, not the reverse.

It is true that Galbraith writes, on occasion, odd and silly things about Communism and capitalism; but what is far more telling is his account of certain leftist intellectual bureaucrats and of his relationships with them. In *The Age of Uncertainty*, he reminisces about them with much affection. Here are some of them:

Gregory Silvermaster, Lauchlin Currie, Isador Lubin, Oscar Lange. Galbraith writes that in California he "looked up especially" to Silvermaster who "later moved on to Washington and was much celebrated by Whittaker Chambers as a leader of the Communist underground in that city." Well, Silvermaster was not merely celebrated as such; so he was. A few years later it was Lauchlin Currie who offered Galbraith an important position in the Washington bureaucracy. Galbraith describes him as an admirably principled Keynesian. Yet Currie was either a Communist or a crypto-Communist, who was very influential in the White House: He was instrumental there in destroying the case for the so-called *modus vivendi* proposal which in late November 1941 had been prepared by the State Department in answer to the last-ditch Japanese compromise proposal which may have avoided, or at least postponed, the Japanese decision to go to war with the United States; thereafter Currie disappeared in South America. Isador Lubin, whom Galbraith calls affectionately "Lube" ("my lifelong friend . . . I have always felt grateful to him"), was another influential person in Washington during the war. He was a key figure in influencing Roosevelt against the Polish government in London and in pushing the case for the pro-Soviet Poles of Moscow and elsewhere, for which he should have earned the gratitude of Molotov and Stalin—who, to be sure, would have

acknowledged their obligation to "Lube" less handsomely than Galbraith, or not at all. Oscar Lange was another Pole who "had moved to the United States to escape the primitive prewar fascism of his homeland." Well, the primitive prewar fascists of Poland were the first nation in Europe to stand up and fight against the then overwhelming power of Hitler's Germany; add to this the fact

that Lange, an intellectual opportunist of the cosmopolitan-Marxist variety, later did his best—and a very bad best it was—for the cause of a Sovietized government of Poland. Alger Hiss and Harry Dexter White, too, flit across Galbraith's pages; about the latter Galbraith simply writes that White was "a highly effective Assistant Secretary of the

(continued on page 40)

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BOOK REVIEWS

It is tempting to call Betty Friedan, whose 1963 book, *The Feminine Mystique*, launched the contemporary women's movement, the Kermansky of her revolution. She is, after all, decently appalled by what the Bolsheviks of latter-day feminism have done to her idea of equality between the sexes. There is a difference, though. Unlike Lenin's predecessor, she is likely to see her version of the revolutionary doctrine prevail.

Three cheers for that. Or, at least, three cheers for moderation and sanity as opposed to utopian frenzy.

The good news is that the American housewife who told all the other American housewives that a professional career can be more gratifying than a perfectly polished kitchen floor is having second thoughts about the way some of her disciples have construed this blameless notion. To be specific, she doesn't think a self-respecting woman has to hate men or be a lesbian or mold her career style on male patterns or pass up motherhood for the rat race. She discerns frustration in women who have taken such routes to fulfillment.

Friedan has even developed reservations about the way the movement she created has dealt with the cherished "constitutional right" to abortion. She feels that being "for abortion" somehow obscures "the life-enhancing value for women and families of the choice to have children." She is vaguely repelled by the "abortion chic" she read about in the *Village Voice*; it seems there are women who, to flaunt their fertility, deliberately become pregnant and then have abortions.

Betty Friedan's discovery, revealed in her new book, *The Second Stage*, is that women still want love—in most cases, heterosexual love. Moreover, they want babies and they value the family as an emotional center for their lives. Maybe it shouldn't take extraordinary powers to see this, or heroism to talk about it. However, the new Friedan thesis has roused excitement everywhere and cries of betrayal among many of the old ERA stalwarts and veterans of the fight to "desexigrate" newspaper help-wanted ads.

Still, this is not the full extent of

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THE SECOND STAGE Betty Friedan / Summit Books / \$14.95

Anne Crutcher

the revisionism. Noting survey data that show women in favor of ad hoc child-care arrangements—in the family if possible—the woman who once believed in a government solution for every problem, public or private, no longer thinks massive, federally funded day-care programs are the answer to the working mother's need for someone to look after the kids.

What's more, this Friedan will actually sit still for a bit of the volunteerism the National Organization for Women denounced as exploitation ten years ago. She reproaches her old colleagues for allowing the Enemy to take over the whole area of traditional feminine concern, leaving the women's movement often as disappointed in its successes as in its failures.

Boldly stating these heresies, Friedan goes on to posit a second stage for the cause. Women must transcend the "feminist mystique" that succeeded the old worship of clean

sheets and homemade cookies. Away with the superwoman who knows how to get hers but hasn't come to terms with her own desire for something more in tune with the universals of humanity than mere feminist battle trophies.

So far, so good. Betty Friedan has always been a more wholesome person than the Simone de Beauvoirs, Marilyn Frenches, and Adrienne Riches who are forever shaking their fists at the sky because they can't stand the ambivalences and tensions the human condition imposes on both sexes. One senses that she knows a bit about love between men and women and between parents and children.

Unhappily, it's not enough to save her from folly and mischief when she tries to think about society. She is a pushover for tendentious psychologizing and for the theory that whatever goes wrong in the world can be

traced to the obscene lusts of capitalist corporations. She is also a dirty fighter, more inclined to dismiss opposing arguments as lies and propaganda than to refute them.

Thus, when confronting some of the differences between men and women that have proved problematical for West Point in its coed phase, her strategy is to trash masculinity. With many a twinkling sneer at "the warrior mentality," "boy-soldier oppressors," and "the undeniable self-hate, weakness and sense of powerlessness machismo hides in men," she calls for a military ambience where "men are allowed to take off their own masks and be sensitive, and yearning and vulnerable."

Lest the thought of being defended by an army of sensitive, yearning, and vulnerable soldiers should dismay anybody, she reminds her readers that the Vietnamese were no taller than most women and they beat us, didn't they? Besides, the next war, if machismo should force us into one, will be all technology anyway, won't it? The real problem, as Friedan sees it, is devising appropriate assignment policies and child-care arrangements for the two-career military family. Analysts of American defense capabilities should note that this social analyst was invited to West Point to help the military establishment modernize its thinking.

Getting at the larger issues, Betty Friedan elaborates an earlier theme. Readers of *The Feminine Mystique* will remember that the reason post-World War II women got trapped in those little suburban houses with all the washing machines and cars and lawn mowers was that profit-crazed advertisers made them think that's what they wanted.

Well, it's still going on. Instead of designing group dwellings that will minimize housework for the job-holding mother and offer social solace to the lonely divorcee, architects pander to the corporations that continue to push individual homes so they can sell more equipment.

Of course, Friedan herself has tried group living with "an extended family of choice" and found it "almost as much work as an individual household." The difficulty, she says, "was not so much physical labor, although there were continual battles as we worked out by trial and error the sharing of the chores and



IS RELIGION A SACRED COW?

Traditionally in America a political conservative is one who holds a deep, abiding respect for the Constitution and treasures the freedoms it was designed to protect. But the "New Conservatives"—the so-called Religious Right—are fueled by issues that have little or nothing to do with conservative politics.

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has endured. By maintaining the separation of church and state, the United States has avoided the intolerance that has so divided the rest of the world. But the growing threat of the politically active Religious Right threatens to divide our country. Political preachers are trying to dictate morality to all Americans in the name of "conservatism."



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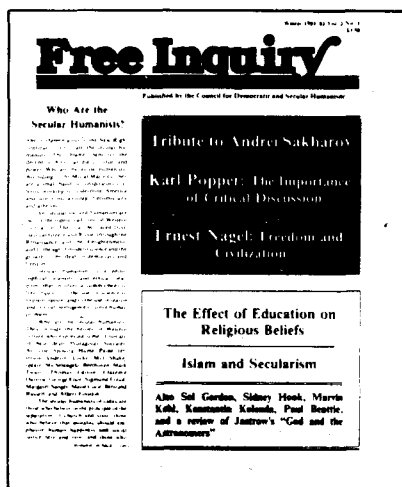
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expenses, but the emotional problems and nuances which were difficult to deal with."

That doesn't excuse the corporations, though. The point is that "The way capitalism has exploited the alienated human needs for love and dignity and has, above all, exploited the resulting sexual obsession for profit or power, have [sic] diverted people from paths toward true autonomy."

It's getting worse, too. "In the Reagan campaign, the far Right clearly played to and diverted our rage, using the power of Government

to subordinate the interests of people to profit and subjecting our lives even further to authoritarian or corporate control, while pretending to do the opposite." She recalls that, while Ronald Reagan doesn't look much like Hitler, "various political scientists have suggested that if fascism comes in America it will be a 'friendly fascism.'"

Like Margaret Fuller, spunkily deciding to accept the universe, Betty Friedan has chosen to admit a few basic truths about human nature. We can applaud her for that, but hardly for the rest of what she has to say. □

LECTURES ON RUSSIAN LITERATURE

Vladimir Nabokov, edited by Fredson Bowers
Harcourt Brace Jovanovich / \$19.95

Charles Nicol

Vladimir Nabokov, the last great modern author, born the same year as Hemingway but much later in his impact, shared with a brilliant generation those emblematic features of exile and translingual authority; yet he was still exemplary: tri-lingual

Charles Nicol, Professor of English at Indiana State University, is co-editor of Nabokov's Fifth Arc, forthcoming from the University of Texas Press.

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and thrice in exile. Chronology is, however, more chance than causality, and literary history hardly begins to classify the individual genius. Better to note that Nabokov's wit was his own; that with Flaubert and Chekhov he shared a scientific attitude and a cold eye; that with Proust he shared a passionate artistry of memory; and that with, say, Melville, Borges, and T.S. Eliot he shared a love of literary reference. He belonged with his readers to a culture of literature. Russian literature was essential to the structure of the early *Despair* and then to *The Gift*, Nabokov's magnificent farewell to his native language; world literature underpinned the late, enormous *Invitation to a Beheading*. He defined his

predecessors by his allusions, the resonance of his language by the books off which it bounced. It was a dialogue not with history but with his fellow masters. The lectures on literature are that dialogue in a different form.

The elective affinities of writers are often fascinating—Herman Melville, Henry James, and D.H. Lawrence all wrote well about Nathaniel Hawthorne without having much else in common. Nabokov's first major publication was a translation into Russian of *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*. As a young émigré in Berlin, he wrote book reviews, the first Russian crossword puzzles, chess problems, and professional articles on butterflies. He helped support himself with English and tennis lessons—all in all, a fitting background for a future American academic, if not necessarily for a major novelist. And indeed, Nabokov's American years produced not only *Lolita*, three other novels, and *Speak, Memory*, but also a wonderfully perverse book on Gogol and a brilliantly eccentric edition of *Eugene Onegin*.

Those many years of teaching, first at Wellesley, then at Cornell, left a quantity of further material on Russian and European fiction; throughout his twenty years in a Swiss hotel, Nabokov promised to publish his classroom lectures. Many students had testified to their fascination, and Nabokov's own memory seems to have improved on his legendary classroom performance: He claimed in those arch late interviews to have delivered the lectures from neatly typed manuscripts. Yet those manuscripts actually were often mere notes which even when typed had been endlessly modified in pen and pencil; most existed only in handwritten form, sometimes in a number

of versions, sometimes in mere fragments—and sometimes lectures had been either delivered extemporaneously or later lost altogether. The interviews created a mythical earlier Nabokov, an ideally austere teacher who perhaps confounded his later avatar when he opened that Pandora's box of old classroom lectures. At his death in 1977 the project was not only unfinished but unbegun. It became a job for experts.

Enter Fredson Bowers, the notorious dean of American scholarly editing, himself in his seventies. In his heyday Bowers had set up a sort of bible of textual editing, laying down the commandments that no later scholar dared violate. His edition of Stephen Crane was outrageous in the length and ostentation of its textual notes. Students from thirty years ago at the University of Virginia remember his affected manner, his cigarette in its long holder, his disciples (parading the same cigarette holder) who thought editing a great science instead of a minor art. Praise the Lord, his version of Nabokov's lectures is merely a "reading edition"—which means that textual notes are minimal, the statement of "Editorial Method" is brief, and Bowers has become all unbuttoned. Yet there is still something of the martinet and a whiff of the overbearingly incompetent here. I have seen only praise for Bowers's editing of these two volumes, the first on Austen, Dickens, Flaubert, Joyce, Kafka, Proust, and Stevenson,* the present one on Chekhov, Dostoyevsky, Gogol, Gorky, Tolstoy, and Turgenev; but it seemed to me in reading the earlier volume that Bowers lost the thread of Nabokov's argument on Joyce and sewed the pieces together cross-patch, and the evidence in this volume is even more disquieting.

Lectures on Russian Literature contains, in the first place, one piece of very polished writing: a large portion of Nabokov's book on Gogol. While that book may have grown out of Nabokov's lecture notes, it seems inexcusable to excerpt the sections on *Dead Souls* and "The Overcoat" just because Nabokov discussed those works in class. The Gogol material should have been either left out altogether, since a published version was already available, or included in its totality—along with, perhaps, Nabokov's published introduction to *A Hero of Our Times* to replace his missing lecture on Lermontov. Now,

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**Lectures on Literature*, Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1980, \$19.95.

remember that in the Gogol section a famous textual editor was not painstakingly putting together a mosaic from old fragments of glittering tile, but merely reprinting a portion of an earlier text over which his author had originally exercised editorial control. All we need is an accurate transcription from one book to another—child's play. Yet here is an excerpt from Nabokov's original *Nikolai Gogol* of 1944, nicely capturing some features of *Dead Souls*:

The faceless saloon-walker in the next passage (whose movements are so quick as he welcomes the newcomers that you cannot discern his features) is again seen a minute later coming down from Chichikov's room and spelling out the name on a slip of paper as he walks down the steps. "Pa-vel I-va-no-vich Chi-chi-kov"; and these syllables have a taxonomic value for the identification of that particular staircase.

When speaking of *The Government Inspector* I found pleasure in rounding up those peripheral characters that enliven the texture of its background. Such characters in *Dead Souls* as the inn-servant or Chichikov's valet (who had a special smell of his own which he imparted at once to his variable lodgings) do not quite belong to that class of Little People. With Chichikov himself and the country squires he meets they share the front stage of the book although they speak little and have no visible influence upon the course of Chichikov's adventures. Technically speaking, the creation of peripheral personages in the play was mainly dependent upon this or that character alluding to people who never emerged from the wings. In a novel the lack of action or speech on the part of secondary characters would not have been sufficient to endow them with that kind of backstage existence, there being no footlights to stress their actual absence from the front place.

Bowers, having decided to omit the section on *The Government Inspector*, must have thought the first sentence of the second paragraph too direct in its pointing to the missing matter; he changed it to "In such works by Gogol as *The Government Inspector* I find pleasure . . ." This pointless alteration of the specific into the general ("such works") immediately forces Bowers to add the redundant "by Gogol"; more important, it fails to acknowledge that the rest of Nabokov's paragraph is a direct comparison of the two works, and in fact, the alteration of past tense to present ("found" to "find") makes hash of that comparison, since Nabokov refers consistently to only the novel in the present tense, with the play relegated to the past. With this kind of dabbling going on, it should be no surprise to find that Bowers the scholar has let a misprint creep into the passage, "toxonomic" for "taxonomic," fittingly implying a sort of poisoned text.

Perhaps at this point we should remind ourselves of Bowers's statement of principles in his Introduction:

The editor of a reading edition may be permitted to deal more freely with inconsistencies, inadvertent mistakes, and incomplete inscription, including the need sometimes to add bridge passages in connection with quotation. On the other hand, no reader would want a manipulated text that endeavored to "improve" Nabokov's writing in any intrusive way even in some of its unpolished sections. Thus a synthetic approach has been firmly rejected, and Nabokov's language has been reproduced with fidelity save for words missing by accident and inadvertent repetitions often the result of incomplete revision.

This sounds better than it works. We have already seen Bowers dealing with previously published material; now let us look at his way with fairly clean typescript. The typescript is clean because this particular lecture was delivered only once, in 1958, at a "Festival of the Arts" at Cornell. The passage is on page one, no less, of *Lectures on Russian Literature*, with the original typed copy conveniently reproduced on the facing page. Nabokov's original, discussing the small compass of Russian literature, proceeds as follows: "It is evident that neither French nor English literature can be so compactly handled. They sprawl over many more centuries, the number of masterpieces is formidable—and this brings me to my first point." If we did not have a statement of principles to guide us, we might be tempted to change "they sprawl" to "both sprawl" or "either sprawls"—no, of course we wouldn't. But neither would we tie down Nabokov's racy syntax to the ponderous academic punctuation that with Bowers passes for "fidelity" to the original: "They sprawl over many more centuries; the number of masterpieces is formidable. This brings me to my first point." After this we can only imagine what Bowers has done in his efforts not to "improve" those obscure and written-over notes that constitute most of Nabokov's lectures.

What about the lectures, finally? Simply, anyone interested in nineteenth-century Russian literature, one of the real glories of world literature, should read them. They are of course uneven. The brief section on Gorky can be skipped, save for its apostrophe to the Moscow Art Theater. The section on Gogol is brilliant, but readers should really turn to Nabokov's *Nikolai Gogol* rather than to this excerpt. The section on Turgenev is sensitive, illuminating, an excellent introduc-

tion to a novelist perhaps not much read today; Nabokov nicely delineates the "Turgenev maiden," celebrates the descriptions of nature, and describes Turgenev's problems with his reputation as a social critic. The section on Chekhov is almost oversympathetic, an opportunity for Nabokov to elaborate his own ideal of a non-didactic literature. In discussing the stories, he sometimes has to fall back on explaining possible ways that scenes might have been done badly in order to show Chekhov's originality. The discussion of *The Seagull* has more bite.

Dostoyevsky is a special case. Determined to prove that Dostoyevsky was no giant at all, Nabokov displays not only a thorough knowledge of the books he is debunking but a sympathy for the personal trials that, in Nabokov's view, destroyed Dostoyevsky as an artist. To attack well, one must define the battlefield, and Nabokov's own ideas about what constitutes literature are laid out on clear tracks that carry his juggernaut to the fray.

But the glory of *Lectures on Russian Literature* is the section, nearly a third of the whole, devoted to Tolstoy—mostly to *Anna Karenina* (translations of which should, in Nabokov's opinion, be entitled *Anna Karenin*). Although thinking little of Tolstoy's philosophy (and conversely, admiring the man for trying to live by it), and thinking still less about Tolstoy's use of the works as vehicles for its propagation, Nabokov is

continually impressed by the artistry and subtlety of Tolstoy's observations: *Anna Karenina* remains beautifully lucid no matter how closely one examines the apparatus of its construction. Here is Nabokov's famous hand-drawn sketch of the "very primitive 'sleeping car'" of Anna's journey, including the direction of the blizzard that beat against its windows on the west side; unfortunately, Nabokov's wonderful and extensive analysis of that scene comes eighty pages earlier in the text than the illustration, but the whole remains one of the most acute studies ever done of a literary work. The passion of Nabokov's ideas even goes beyond reasonable presentation: "Tolstoy's prose keeps pace with our pulses, his characters seem to move with the same swing as the people passing under our window while we sit reading his book." This is, I think, more in the arena of faith than in that of criticism, but Nabokov comes close to proving it.

Nabokov always detested the exhuming of an author's literary remains; he swore he destroyed the working manuscripts of his novels. Perhaps he thought differently of these lectures, which after all do represent the detritus of public occasions. *Onegin* translator Walter Arndt may be amused to see another of Nabokov's rhymed Pushkin translations come to light. I wouldn't have missed any of it.

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I can do no better than to repeat the inappropriately appropriate close of one of his sections on Gogol:

So to sum up: the story goes this way: mumble, mumble, lyrical wave, mumble, lyrical wave, mumble, lyrical wave, mumble, fantastic climax, mumble, mumble,

and back into the chaos from which they all had derived. At this superhigh level of art, literature is of course not concerned with pitying the underdog or cursing the upperdog. It appeals to that secret depth of the human soul where the shadows of other worlds pass like the shadows of nameless and soundless ships. □

HOW TO WIN ARGUMENTS
William A. Rusher / Doubleday / \$10.95

HOW TO STAND UP FOR YOUR RIGHTS—AND WIN
Roy Cohn / Simon & Schuster / \$13.95

Mitchell S. Ross

Here are two fresh pieces of evidence that America's book publishers are thinking of you. If you are always being bumped around this rude world, always ending up on the raw end of deals, then perhaps Roy Cohn can be of service. If your tongue tends to become tied whenever you enter into high-minded colloquies, then maybe William Rusher is your man.

Cohn's is the more practical of the two books; Rusher's the more literate. Both books include many instructive and entertaining anecdotes. Neither Rusher nor Cohn is much concerned here with promoting conservative politics, although neither author hides his political preferences. Cohn sneaks in a few conventional jabs at the welfare state and Rusher's book comes dressed with a friendly jacket blurb from John Kenneth Galbraith, calling it "an amusing and informed treatise. And when you consider the cases the author has to argue, you know that it has to be good." Both Rusher and Cohn are mainly filling the basic prescription of how-to books: Help the reader help himself.

Docile soul that I am, I found much in both texts to enlighten me. And yet . . . when I recently—needless to say, with the greatest reluctance—became involved in some disputes involving my personal affairs, and I attempted to apply the authors' wisdom to these, I found it almost totally useless. Why was this so? I suspect it is that these books, like all how-to books, are intrinsically weakest where they might be most helpful: By addressing themselves to readers in general they address themselves to nobody in particular. Most problems in real life are filled

with peculiarities deriving from human idiosyncrasy, and the how-to book, far from providing us with real assistance, ultimately leaves us with a sense of the hollowness of its advice and the loneliness of our own situations.

Let us consider Rusher's mellow meditation for a moment. Anyone who has ever encountered or witnessed the man in debate can attest that Rusher is as formidable an opponent as you could ever hope to find. In *How to Win Arguments* he freely shares the stories of some of his triumphs (and disappointments) with us. In the course of a discussion of radio and television arguments he writes of how he impaled the reputation of Jane Fonda on a "Dick Cavett Show" when his opposite number was the actor Donald Sutherland, a friend of La Fonda.

Rusher tells how the hour was won by sneaking in the last word—a reference to Jane wearing "a tooth of Ho Chi Minh's on a necklace." Rusher continues: "Actually I knew that what she wore was a piece of metal salvaged from a U.S. bomber shot down over North Vietnam, but I had playfully chosen 'a tooth of Ho Chi Minh's' as about equally offensive from an American standpoint and rather more comical." Never mind the ethical question for now (Sutherland sulked that "conservatives are always doing this sort of thing" but he was given no time for a real rebuttal): The point is that beyond such obvious steps as preparing and organizing yourself, the key to winning an argument is to be William A. Rusher.

I am reminded of the occasion, for some reason not mentioned in *How to Win Arguments*, when Rusher invaded my home precinct in Detroit in order to do battle with a local

television host, a fabled fire-breather of liberal bent. After assailing Rusher for several minutes and coming off much the worse for it, the host finally threw up his arms and asked (my memory of his words may be slightly imprecise), "Tell me, Mr. Rusher. Do I represent this great liberal rot you're talking about?" To which Rusher suavely responded, "In a small way, Mr. Gordon, in a small way." How is Arnie Average to match such strokes in his own arguments? As for Mr. Gordon, he suffered a heart attack and died not too long after running into Rusher.

Roy Cohn's book, too, is filled with shrewd advice, but how much of it will ever prove useful to readers who aren't half as fast on their feet as Cohn himself? "I don't expect anyone to agree with everything in this book," he writes. "I do want to give encouragement and support to those

who are willing to stop being the Caspar Milquetoasts of the world. The Bible says that the meek shall inherit the earth. But in my experience the only earth the meek inherit is that in which they are eventually buried. I write for those who would take charge of their own lives, those who are willing to stand up for their rights!"

Very noble, very nice. But surely Roy Cohn realized long ago that his brand of street wisdom cannot be transmitted through a how-to book, even as William Rusher knows that the publication of *How to Win Arguments* will not inspire the spawning of Rusherian advocates across the Republic. No, ladies and gentlemen: Rusher and Cohn will roar with approval at the arrival of their royalty checks as the American publishing industry marches on, churning out how-to books that promise and then deny those suckers—the book buyers—an even break. □

A TREATISE ON THE FAMILY
Gary Becker / Harvard University Press / \$20.00

Kenneth Stein

"Marriage is a great institution, but I'm not ready for an institution, yet."
—Mae West

Until now, economists examining human institutions have kept away from the family, ignoring the household's dynamics even while using it as a fundamental unit in their calculations. Now, Gary Becker comes forward to remedy all that. Indeed, he is ambitious enough to want to explain not only the economics of the family but the family itself, using the assumptions normally used to explain economic transactions. Becker begins *A Treatise on the Family* by telling us that he will attempt to "analyze marriage, births, divorce, division of labor in households, prestige, and other nonmaterial behavior with the tools and framework developed for material behavior." His is an attempt that is, at times, brilliant, and always elegant, but an attempt that ultimately, because this analysis is inappropriate to nonmarket transactions, fails.

Two hundred years of studying markets has produced a coherent,

Kenneth Stein is a free-lance writer who works in Cambridge but lives in New York.

and beautifully simple, set of generalizations about man's behavior. The modern economic approach, as Becker describes it, "assumes that individuals maximize their utility from basic preferences that do not change rapidly over time." Two results spring from these assumptions. First, economic man acts so that the marginal costs of his activities are equal to their marginal benefits; second, he acts so that the marginal benefit of a dollar spent on one activity equals the marginal benefit of a dollar spent on any other. It is this theory that Becker appropriates to explain the various phenomena of family.

This is an attractive approach. Self-interest, construed broadly enough, can easily be viewed as the basic motivation behind human action. Of course, "broadly enough" may be so all-encompassing that the theory loses all predictive value. However, if we accept a notion of self-interest narrow enough to fall short of tautology, then an analysis of the family follows logically. Becker explains that there is division of labor within the household for much the same reasons as within industry. He

Mitchell S. Ross is the author of *The Literary Politicians* and *An Invitation to Our Times*.

develops a theory of marriage, and "marriage markets," by supposing that a man marries only if the gains outweigh the cost of giving up his bachelorhood. He gives us a theory of the equilibrium demand for children, derived in the same way as the demand for any other "commodity": Parents produce until the marginal cost of another child exceeds his marginal utility. Becker even manages to analyze altruism as a manifestation of self-interest, by including in self-interest the pleasure one derives from another's happiness.

At this level, although we really haven't learned anything new, it appears that Becker has provided a nice general framework for our observations. When he becomes more specific, however, he starts running into problems. And when Becker gets specific, he gets specific! The book is highly mathematical and the math will be inaccessible to anyone unfamiliar with multivariate calculus and constrained optimizations. Whoever does not enjoy sifting through pages of formulae should beware. At this level of complexity, moreover, when Becker uses economic analysis actually to try to predict behavior, the logic becomes much less elegant, and our framework much less nice.

Two examples show the type of problems inherent in the *Treatise*: the analysis of the demand for children and the examination of altruism and selfishness. The demand for children, according to Becker, arises in a very simple manner. A parent's utility is a function of the number of his children, of their "quality," and of the quantity of other commodities he owns. On the other hand, the parent's budget and the expenditure on children and other goods cannot exceed total income. Optimizing utility given this constraint yields results that are, to say the least, counter-intuitive. Becker predicts, for example, that an exogenous decrease in quality would lead to a large increase in the desired number of children. This implies, by Becker's definition of quality, that the parents of children with birth defects would, in some sense, love them less, and desire more children to compensate. Clearly, this is not verified by experience.

Becker has more trouble discussing altruism. In the *Treatise* he restates some results derived earlier, the most famous and most problematic of which is the "rotten-kid theorem." According to this theorem, "Each beneficiary, no matter how selfish, maximizes the family income of his benefactor and thereby internalizes the effects of his actions on other beneficiaries." Becker tells us

that "selfish" Tom would choose not to take an action that would raise his income by \$1000 and lower that of his sister, Jane, by \$1500, even if no one would ever know that he was the cause of Jane's misfortune. This, to anyone who has ever known a rotten kid, hell, to anyone who has ever been a rotten kid, is absurd. Anyone who knows him knows that, likely as not, Tom will do the foul deed.

These difficulties derive from the innate unsuitability of economics to the analysis of non-market transactions. To make his engine run, Becker has to assume, implicitly, that actors have something approaching perfect information. In market transactions, the problem of information is surmounted through the use of prices. Indeed, one of the main functions of prices is to carry information,

and one of the main functions of markets is to disseminate it. In non-market transactions, however, there is no substitute for prices, and of course no chance of a selfish young man, or his father, ever acquiring all of the relevant information.

Thus, in the absence of prices and markets, economic theories alone cannot serve as good predictors of human behavior. Becker has claimed,

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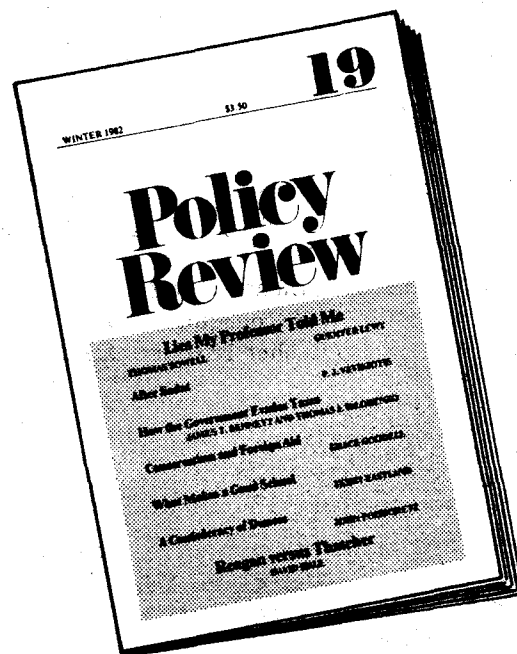
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for example, that the demand for children depends specifically upon the ratios of fixed to variable costs for quantity and quality and the ratio of marginal variable costs to average variable costs of quality. This makes perfect sense—except that I would be hard put to estimate the actual magnitude of any one of these variables. Their relevance to my behavior must be limited. Without information, an individual who wishes to maximize has to do so by guessing at these missing numbers. Behavior is determined not by utility maximizing, but by judgment and subjective probability.

Strangely enough, Becker himself provides the best example of all this in a discussion of marriage and divorce. Earlier he had told us that participants in marriage markets choose the mates that maximize their total utility. Now he modifies this. Where information is expensive, "rational persons marry even when certain of eventually finding better prospects with additional search, for the cost of additional search exceeds the expected benefits from better prospects." The actors maximize their expected rather than their actual utility, a difference that is, as we have seen, important. It is so important that when, in chapter ten, Becker finally acknowledges that "participants in marriage markets hardly know their own interests and capabilities, let alone the dependability, sexual compatibility and other traits of potential spouses," it is hard to avoid concluding that he has just presented a devastating critique of chapters one to nine.

Thus, even if man does maximize his utility over stable preferences (a point that is itself open to conten-

tion), Becker's argument itself is of little utility. Without any form of markets or price information, maximizing is not what determines behavior. By ignoring the problem of

imperfect information throughout most of *A Treatise on the Family*, Becker has done himself, his readers, and the institution of marriage a great disservice. □

W.H. AUDEN: A BIOGRAPHY
Humphrey Carpenter / Houghton Mifflin / \$15.95

Terry Teachout

Like so many of his fellow homosexuals, W.H. Auden publicly professed to abhor biography while privately relishing it. In Auden's case, however, the schism between preaching and practice was unusually blatant. While protesting that "[b]iographies of writers are always superfluous and usually in bad taste," dismissing the run of literary biographers as "gossip-writers and voyeurs calling themselves scholars," and promulgating a Maugham-like posthumous bull calling for all true friends to burn his letters, Auden simultaneously (and consistently) managed to write favorable reviews of numerous biographies. Indeed, he actually had the gall to complain on one memorable occasion that J.R. Ackerley's *My Father and Myself*, while admirable in its way, really should have been hotted up with some properly graphic sexual revelations—and then proceeded to speculate on what they might have been.

So it's anyone's guess what Auden would have thought of Humphrey Carpenter's new book *W.H. Auden: A Biography*, though one suspects he would have been won over in the end by Mr. Carpenter's careful scholarship, solidly crafted prose, and generally sympathetic tone. The author has left no biographical stone unturned; even the specific sexual preferences of Auden and his longtime "chum" Chester Kallman are described in tersely Latinate detail. While explicit, Mr. Carpenter's book is not salacious—nor does it sink into

the slough of academic despond. "It is not a book of literary criticism," he says. "I have not usually engaged in a critical discussion of Auden's writings. But I have tried to show how they often arose from the circumstances of his life, and I have also attempted to identify the themes and ideas that concerned him." The results, a near-definitive biographical pendant to many specifically literary studies of Auden which have appeared over the years, leave virtually nothing to be desired.

In a way, the most noteworthy aspect of this outstanding book is the candor with which it confronts the issue of Auden's sexual inclinations. "Writers," Auden once commented, "are usually in the unfortunate predicament of having to speak the truth without having the authority to speak it." This is particularly true of the biographer whose subject is homosexual; although the only sensible and coherent approach is one of absolute honesty, few scholars are in a position to exercise it. Fortunately, Mr. Carpenter's task was considerably simplified by the fact that most of the principals of Auden's life are either dead or "out of the closet"; in addition, he has approached his duties with a gratifyingly cold eye, taking care to avoid the "camp" archness which mars, say, Charles Osborne's biography-memoir of Auden or (to cite a more extreme case) A.J. Langguth's recent *Saki*.

Such candor is essential to any serious discussion of Auden's stature as a poet; and though Mr. Carpenter's purpose in writing *W.H. Auden:*

A Biography is not to deal with the vexing question of "the Auden problem"—he is basically on the side of those who view Auden's later work as the logical consequence of his artistic development rather than as a catastrophic decline—his book inevitably sheds new light on an old controversy. Edmund Wilson hinted at the fundamental nature of this controversy when, in a 1956 essay on Auden's American years, he described the poet as "one of the most edible, one of the most satisfactory of contemporary writers," giving the following explanation:

One saw with surprise that Auden—so far from being a rarity that could only be appreciated by a few—was the old-fashioned kind of poet, like Browning or Henry Wadsworth Longfellow . . . who is at his best when printed and read in bulk. He amuses us, converses with us, does his best to give us good advice; he sings us comic songs, supplies us with brilliant elegies on the deaths of great contemporaries; he charms us, he lulls us to sleep; he lifts us to a moment of inspiration.

Wilson was, of course, writing in praise of Auden; but there is in his praise an oddly ambivalent note, one which suggests that he meant by stealth to broach an uncomfortable question: Can so "edible" a poet, whatever his virtues, be great?

Now greatness tends to be a much overrated virtue—any number of gifted artists have permanently derailed their careers chasing after it—and one would be inclined to dismiss the open question of Auden's "greatness" as irrelevant were it not for the fact that, from Oxford days on, Auden advertised himself as a great poet. He produced verse plays, lengthy poetic cycles, even a "Baroque eclogue." He downgraded the lyric side of his art, going so far as (in the 1945 *Collected Poetry*) to attach gratingly ironic titles to many of his loveliest early verses, as if he distrusted the emotions they embodied. He spent the last years of his life striving toward an increasingly austere and unsentimental diction, ceaselessly revising or suppressing his earlier poems to suit his newly religious view of the world. Aided by his voracious intelligence and technical virtuosity, Auden mastered the forms and manners of greatness early on, so much so that the majority of his contemporaries were willing to take him at his self-declared value even when—as was so often the case in the early thirties—the content of his formally impeccable verse was impenetrably obscure.

Yet greatness always seemed something of an impersonation with

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Auden; even during his peak years, just before the Second World War, it was his lyric side which produced the real masterpieces. The *impulse* to greatness was there, but it was continually at war with a deep-seated flippancy. When Auden moved to the United States in 1939, this peculiar lightmindedness began to dominate his work. The lyric strain gradually dried up, and Auden's poetry ultimately degenerated into a bizarre kind of religious-intellectual light verse. The poet-critic Randall Jarrell followed Auden's career closely, and the change in Jarrell's feelings about his work constitutes a disquieting chronicle of the change in Auden's artistic personality. "He wrote . . . some of the strongest, strangest, and most original poetry that anyone has written in this century," Jarrell said of Auden's pre-1939 work. By 1940, however, Jarrell had come to feel that Auden had "gone in the right direction, and a great deal too far"; and, by 1955, Jarrell could say of *The Shield of Achilles* that "this is what great and good poets do when they don't bother even to try and write great and good poems, now that they've learned that—it's Auden's leitmotif, these days—art is essentially frivolous."

The key word here is, of course, *frivolous*, and it immediately brings to mind the famous passage from *Don Fernando* in which Somerset Maugham reflects on the distinctive traits of the homosexual: "With his keen insight and quick sensibility he can pierce the depths, but in his innate frivolity he fetches up from them not a priceless jewel but a tinsel ornament." It may seem the act of a deeply fissured personality—a "double man," to use Auden's own phrase—to write a gravely beautiful villanelle like "Time will say nothing but I told you so" and then, five years later, saddle it with the jeering title "But I Can't"; but poem and title lie on opposite sides of a crucial line of demarcation in the life of W.H. Auden, and they symbolize the profound change which Auden's new life worked on his art. In the fateful years between 1939 and 1945 the English Auden, a man at odds with his sexual identity and unable to sustain long-term relationships, was gradually transformed into the American Auden, a complacent Anglican communicant living with Chester Kallman and content to search out "cosiness." The stereotype had at last come true; the frivolous side of the double man finally prevailed; and a poet who once

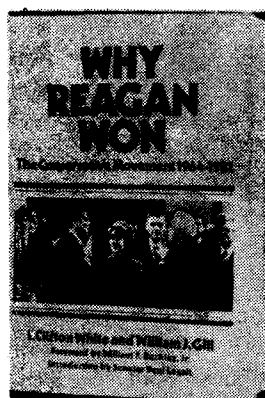
dealt in genuine jewels now cheerfully peddled a brilliant grade of tinsel to his surprised and, finally, disappointed public.

Mr. Carpenter's book vividly charts Auden's artistically fatal quest for the reassuring certainties of domesticity; and, unlike Leon Edel's too relentlessly interpretative life of Henry James, it allows us to draw our own conclusions from the flawlessly

presented evidence within, clearing the way for still more new approaches to Auden. Those approaches, needless to say, will continue to be made; for, despite his failings as an artist, Auden will always remain a poet to whom readers are drawn again and again. He is, I suppose, not "great" in the way Eliot is great, even as Beethoven was a "greater" composer than Poulenc; but anyone

insensitive to the unique role the Poulencs and Audens play in the hierarchy of art is insensitive to the meaning of art itself. It is a reliable measure of Auden's stature that we read *W.H. Auden: A Biography* with the closest attention and interest. We may read it once as a tribute to Humphrey Carpenter's skill—but we will reread it because Auden, even the late Auden, matters. □

Your Story—Why Reagan Won



Why Reagan Won: The Conservative Movement 1964-1981 F. Clifton White and William J. Gill

Introduction by Paul Laxalt
Foreword by William F. Buckley, Jr.

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Senator Paul Laxalt and F. Clifton White

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A LIFE IN TWO CENTURIES
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Arnold Beichman

Jay Lovestone, the one-time Communist Party leader who in later life became a most effective anti-Communist foreign policy adviser to George Meany, once told me a story about Stalin, whom he and Bertram Wolfe knew personally in the 1920s, the early years of the Communist revolution, before Stalin had consolidated his dictatorial power. Reading Wolfe's posthumously published autobiography I recalled Lovestone's story, which goes something like this:

It seems that one H. Walecki, Stalin's Comintern representative, reported to Stalin after a Polish Communist Party meeting which had been sharply divided over whether or not to support Stalin's takeover of the Comintern from Nikolai Bukharin. The right wing, Walecki told Stalin, was persuaded easily enough by Walecki's arguments to support Stalin, but the left-wing had to be threatened by Walecki with expulsion and other reprisals before finally capitulating. "So, I recommend," said Walecki to Stalin, "that you favor the Polish party's right-wing because you can reason with them, not the left-wing which is supporting you out of fear."

"No, we will support the left-wing and destroy the right-wing," Stalin is reported to have replied. "Since the right-wing's support is based on conviction, the right-wing may someday withdraw that support out of conviction. The left-wing, however, acted out of fear and, therefore, will remain loyal."

Smart bastard, that Stalin. That's why he died in bed in 1953 while his opponents were executed in the Lubianka or starved to death in the Gulag. It was also why, in June 1929, he kicked Lovestone and Wolfe out of the U.S. Communist Party and replaced them with obedient, servile types like Earl Browder.

Arnold Beichman's essay, "The Myth of American Fascism," will appear in *Four Myths*, a collection of essays forthcoming from the Heritage Foundation.

The Lovestone story came to mind while reading Wolfe's chapter, "The Factional War in the American Party and the Comintern." Wolfe's 700-page autobiography is itself part of the absorbing history of American radicalism going back to the days before World War I and through the Russian Revolution, one of whose effects in the United States was to inhibit the development of an American revolutionary movement. For to Stalin, as to Lenin, it was far more important to control the party machinery than to allow an independent revolutionary radicalism to flourish—independent, that is, of the Party Secretary's will and decision. Lenin's 1902 pamphlet *What Is To Be Done?* had set the course for the revolution-to-come, and Stalin, when he began his struggle for power after Lenin's death in 1924, followed Lenin's lead. None of this was obvious to Lovestone, the American party's executive secretary, or Wolfe, then working in Moscow for the Comintern. When Lovestone, Wolfe, and their allies were expelled, they formed their own Communist opposition group, opposition more or less to Stalin but not to Communism, because they had not yet overcome their loyalty to a fictitious proletariat and a so-called vanguard party.

Had Stalin's power been greater in 1929, the year that Lovestone, Wolfe, and Wolfe's majority in the CP-USA leadership were given a kangaroo trial in Moscow, both men would have probably suffered one of those fatal accidents or mysterious assassinations which were the common fate of Stalin's opponents. Which reminds me of another story:

This one is about Earl Browder who was expelled from the CP-USA in 1945 when Stalin no longer had any need for the wartime "united front" policy with the United States. Disgraced though he was by the party which he had commanded for Stalin for some fifteen years, Browder insisted that the Soviet Union under Stalin's leadership was still mankind's best hope. Stalin permitted Browder to come to Moscow to appeal his expulsion. Since it was Stalin, however, who had ordered

the expulsion in the first place (via an article by the then French Communist leader, Jacques Duclos, in *Cahiers du Communisme*) the appeal was doomed. Browder returned to the U.S. from what might have been the dragon's mouth, singing Stalin's praises.

Challenged in some Brooklyn hall to debate by Max Shachtman, a one-time Trotskyite leader who had returned to democratic socialism, Browder opened with a slavish speech about Stalin and the Great October Revolution, ignoring the fact that he, too, had been purged from leadership by Stalin. Shachtman rose to the rebuttal, came forward, and, pointing his finger at the now-seated Browder, said in a quiet, dramatic voice: "There, but for the accident of geography, sits a corpse."

Bert Wolfe was 81 when he died in 1977, a respected senior scholar at the Hoover Institution. His was an eventful life as radical publicist, Communist organizer, *littérateur*, a student of Spanish literature and philosophy, and, above all, an influential Sovietologist. His book, *Three Who Made a Revolution*, is regarded as a seminal work and ought to be must reading for statesmen who deal with the Soviet Union.

As if heedless of Clemenceau's famous dictum, Wolfe remained curiously faithful to his early socialist and later Communist beliefs until his early forties. But then, Wolfe at the outset of World War II was also a die-hard isolationist who, despite Hitler, thought the United States ought to remain neutral. His pro-neutrality became even stronger after Hitler's attack on his erstwhile ally, Stalin, in June 1941. Let both totalitarian powers destroy each other and then let America use "her magnificent resources to help a ruined Europe to liberate and rebuild herself" is the way he describes his feelings at the time.

Wolfe wrote widely about Soviet affairs and what should be done to thwart Russia's global ambitions. In 1950, he accepted appointment to the Voice of America as chief of the Ideological Advisory Staff of the State Department. It was an appointment which occasioned some difficulty because of Wolfe's Communist past and—the story might be apocryphal—because in filling out the State Department job application form he gave as name and address of his only employer up until that time, "Josef Stalin, The Kremlin, Moscow, USSR." The State Department was aghast but there was no denying the truth. Finally, I believe, the matter

was discussed with Senator Karl Mundt, who then discussed it with Senator Joe McCarthy, and all was quiet. Wolfe worked for VOA until 1954.

Wolfe's most significant contribution to Soviet studies was his insistence, as Leonard Schapiro points out in the introduction, that the defects of the Soviet system are not "temporary aberrations in a potentially perfect system, but vices inherent in the very mechanism of power that Lenin and his followers had created." This may not sound like much, but a quarter of a century ago during the post-Stalin era, many Left liberals, permanently melioristic about the course of Soviet policy, polluted the vocabulary of politics with illusionist phrases like "liberalization," "the thaw," "the new look," "collective leadership," and others. Even among anti-Communist liberals there was the desperately held belief that the growth of "the new class" of Soviet engineers, intellectuals, scientists, and white collar workers would effectively restrain Khrushchev from the adventurism and tyrannies of the Stalin regime. George Kennan was predicting an "erosion of despotism" in the Soviet Union and writing in June 1957 that "when [Khrushchev] says that the time has come when it would be well if we would cease to regard each other as robbers, I think he might just have something here."

It was this same Kennan who discovered that following Stalin's death, the new Soviet regime was moving "away from the horror of unadulterated police intrigue, and in the direction of a rudimentary parliamentarianism." And in August 1955, shortly after the Geneva summit meeting, the *New Statesman* came out with the blinding editorial revelation that "the Cold War was suddenly called off at Geneva because both sides recognized that [their mutual] suspicions were entirely unfounded." What Wolfe was fighting was the dominant culture of the time which forgave Khrushchev even after the invasion of Hungary, and which regarded Mao's China as the Land of Beulah.

Toward the end of his life, Wolfe even gave up his early socialism. He writes in his autobiography:

When I contemplate the massive growth of our national budget and our national bureaucracy, the enormous quantity of paper shufflers, elected by no one, and not responsible to the people, when I see how legislators, executives, and judges act, and, of their own regulations of local and state entities, of schools, colleges, universities and private enterprise of every description, I sometimes think that we, too, are marching unconsciously into a kind of state socialism, marching back-

wards into socialism even as we shout free markets and free enterprise.

It may be that I have been somewhat unjust by devoting so much space to Wolfe's political life and ignoring his often amusing and scholarly chapters on Diego Rivera, on Wolfe's adventures in revolution-torn Spain in 1937, his devotion to Hispanic literature and his Cervantes

studies, or his early life as a Jewish boy growing up in Brooklyn. Yet 26 of his 40 chapters are wholly political in content, and understandably more compelling.

The moral of Wolfe's story is that of a man who, born with a deep sense of humanism and ethics, ignored the meaning of his own character to promote what he was sure would be a

paradise on earth, one without war and poverty. What he ignored for a time and, perhaps, even for too long, was that it is not possible to be a Communist or other kind—if there is any other kind—of totalitarian and not lie to oneself. Nietzsche once wrote:

The most common lie is that which one

lies to oneself; lying to others is relatively an exception. Now this wishing-not-to-see what one does see, this wishing to see as one sees, is almost the first condition for all those who are *party* in any sense: of necessity, the party man becomes the liar. . . . The man of faith is not free to have any conscience at all for questions of "true" and "untrue"; to have integrity on *this* point would at once destroy him. [italics in original] □

S P E C T A T O R ' S J O U R N A L

THIS NEW NATION OF IMMIGRANTS

by Ben J. Wattenberg

Part of the American folk mythology has been: "We are a nation of immigrants; we are unique in the world because we come from all over the world." Until recently only half of that statement was true. We were, are, and will be a nation of immigrants and their descendants (with the possible exception of the 0.6 percent of our population who are American Indians). But we were not—not really—from "everywhere." Where we were from was Europe (voluntarily) and Africa (involuntarily). In addition, there were some sizable numbers of Americans of Mexican descent and smaller pockets of Japanese and Chinese. Beyond that the numbers were very small—demographic drops in the ethnic ocean.

That has changed. We are well on the way to becoming the first truly universalist nation. Every day more so, we Americans are from everywhere. All this may turn out to yield a change in the nature of our nation that can profoundly affect our attitudes, our foreign policy, our economy, our domestic tranquility, and, indeed, our manifest destiny. Consider a few numbers to gain a flavor of what's happening. From 1820 to 1960, of the legal immigrants to the United States, 82 percent came from Europe. But in the late 1960s, only 34 percent of our immigrants came from Europe. And in the 1970s, only 18 percent.

Ben J. Wattenberg is a senior fellow at the American Enterprise Institute. This article is adapted from Mr. Wattenberg's bi-monthly United Feature Syndicate column.

Look at some immigration numbers from selected countries comparing the whole decade of the fifties with the first nine years of the seventies. The number of Filipino immigrants went from 19,000 to 312,000. The number of immigrants from India went from 2,000 to 143,000. From Korea, 6,000 to 236,000. From Vietnam, 3,000 to 132,000. From Cuba, 79,000 to 251,000. From Ecuador, 10,000 to 44,000. From Haiti, 4,000 to 50,000. From Mexico, 300,000 to 583,000. From China and Hong Kong, 26,000 to 205,000. Our new immigrants, in short, are not from where our earlier immigrants were from—Europe and Africa. They are from the other places—Latin America and Asia. Not only have the proportions changed, the amounts have changed. We took in 2.5 million legal immigrants in the fifties and 3.3 million in the sixties. The figure for the seventies is calculated to be 4.3 million. Estimating the illegals, also mostly from Latin America and Asia, the totals could easily be doubled.

All this means a great deal to America. It can cause problems and solve problems. It means that if we keep it up we will continue to grow as a country for a long time. That would not happen without immigration. American birth rates have shrunk so low that we are "below replacement," as are most of the other advanced industrialized nations. So, we will be growing when Europe, the Soviet Union, and Japan will be diminishing in population. Is this good? Well, there are some populous countries that are not powerful and influential. But there are no powerful and influential nations that are not populous.

Then there is the potential problem that so many Mexicans in the American Southwest could in the future agitate for an "American Quebec" with all the attendant problems of bilingualism and biculturalism. Don't worry. California is receiving too many Koreans, Chinese, Vietnamese, and Filipinos—and they don't speak Spanish.

There is also the problem of jobs. It is alleged that "immigrants take jobs away from native Americans." This can be a short-term phenomenon, if sometimes a painful and tragic one. But, on balance, hardworking people create wealth and jobs, for themselves and for the nation in which they live.

And consider foreign policy. Every immigrant group ultimately has a claim on American diplomacy. Since Day One of the USA, we have had a "special relationship" with the English. Why? Because so many Americans came from England and because so much of our culture was English. But later immigrants weren't from England. And so today, because we have so many Greek-Americans, we have a problem when we want to send arms to Turkey. And because we have so many Jews, we support Israel with more vigor than any other nation does. A rising black consciousness in America has changed our policies in Africa.

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(continued from page 29)

Treasury." White was highly effective, all right—often in high matters of statecraft that had little or nothing to do with the Department of the Treasury; he was involved in a number of pro-Soviet intrigues whether he was a secret Communist or not (I am inclined to think the latter).

"The war being over," Galbraith writes, "Communism could again be the enemy. So could the impractical idealists who held that people turned to socialism out of exploitation or despair." They were far from being impractical; and they were light-years away from any kind of respectable idealism. At best, Trotsky-types rather than Stalin-types, at worst volunteer agents of Soviet causes, they were self-serving, opportunistic, narrow-minded, sour, and ambitious. Galbraith was attracted to these people not because they were Communists or crypto-Communists; he was attracted to them because they were influential at the time, early prototypes of the kind of pseudo-cosmopolitan intellectual bureaucracy that has had a powerful attraction for Galbraith throughout his life. In a chapter of a book wherein I attempted to describe the state of American public opinion circa 1945, I wrote that the best description of certain crypto-Communists was composed by Edmund Wilson in a foreword to his novel, *I Thought Of Daisy*, which I must now quote at some length:

Some time in the late thirties, at the time when [the Soviets] were . . . coming to seem respectable and Communism a passport to power in an impending international bureaucracy, I thought of doing a brief sequel to *Daisy*, in which . . . some Washington official . . . of pygmy size, would be giving himself a sense of importance and enjoying a good deal of excitement through an underground connection with the Communists . . . [their] set would go on drinking, playing bridge and making passes at one another's girls with the conviction that these activities had been given a new dignity by being used to cover up operations which would eventually prove world-shaking and land them somehow at the top of the heap . . .

Whether these people were actually Communist Party members or not makes little difference. In any event, Galbraith was lucky or judicious enough (probably both) to avoid that kind of entanglement, whereby he kept both his FBI record and his substantial nose clean. The harm that a non-Communist such as "Lube" did to Poland was probably much worse than the doings of Alger Hiss who, his presence at Yalta, etc., notwithstanding, had been merely playing earlier at Being A Spy. There exist innumerable examples of bureaucrats in high positions who can damage a cause they do not like. In one instance Galbraith himself admits of one such example: A footnote on page 182 reveals how his wife "had done in" Otto von Hapsburg who had Franklin Roosevelt's ear and who in 1942 was trying to form an Austrian legion to fight with the American army. Between this kind of sabotage and "Lube's" sabotage of a free Poland, and Philby and Maclean's sabotage of the unfortunate Albanians whom the CIA parachuted into the Balkans in 1950, there exist important differences of degree; but it is at least arguable that they are not very different in kind.

But if Galbraith's facile treatment of these people as harmless and dedicated idealists is wrong so is Hook's assessment of Galbraith. For one thing—a minor one—Hook admires Galbraith's writing. Yet Galbraith, especially in this (already the third) version of his memoirs is not really an elegant writer; and he often slips. An undue number of his sentences begin with "And . . ." He writes that C.D. Jackson was "a large, effluent man"—which can only mean that this mogul of Time-Life-Fortune was suffering from the opposite of constipation. (Galbraith is as wrong about the meaning of "effluent" as he was of the related word "affluent" which made him famous: The society he had written about was inflated, not affluent; but that is another argument, another story.) On page 356 there is a sentence which ought to inhibit those who consider Galbraith as The Great Stylist of the Age. "Why a lifeboat designed to sink a bit as the ship sinks?" he writes. Why he thinks this sink I not know.

All through Hook's assessment of Galbraith there is a perceptible touch of envy. Of course Galbraith is there among the Beautiful People, and at Harvard—while Hook must, by necessity, keep company with some of the right-wing Neanderthals at the Hoover Institution. Now Bella Abzug,

too, must know that Jackie Onassis is hopelessly more attractive than she is; but we can be certain that Bella, being a woman, will not say (or think) that Jackie's shortcomings are due to her ideological inadequacy. Alas, Hook is not a woman, and not much of a philosopher, either: He is an ideologue, and he treats Galbraith as if Galbraith, too, were an ideologue; Hook does not know an ideologue from an opportunist. "I am convinced," Hook writes, "that if George Kennan does not win Galbraith over and he continues to resist the lunacy of unilateral disarmament, Galbraith . . . would fight for human freedom in Cambridge, Massachusetts, or Townsend, Vermont." Knowing more about opportunists than does Hook, I am not so sure. What I am sure of is that for Sidney Hook to call George Kennan a lunatic and a defeatist amounts to the kind of mindless insolence of which only a New York cafeteria ideologue is capable. And the trouble with Hook is not only that he is an ideologue; he does not understand how, when the crunch comes (and often when the chocolate mousse comes), an opportunist is more reprehensible than a committed Communist. It is not only that he does not know an ideologue from an opportunist; he does not know an opportunist from an innocent.

The best one can say about Galbraith's political and ideological preferences is that Chesterton's maxim applies to him in part: Galbraith "is one of those snobs who think they can atone for being hard-hearted by being soft-headed." He is not always and altogether soft-headed: only when he so chooses, for public purposes. He is, however, an archetype of that Anglo-Saxon genus, the liberal snob. I have very little to say against snobs; some of my best friends are snobs; snobs whose illusions and whose esthetic visions of the world of society often make the ugliness of that world seem a wee bit more attractive than it is.* They are, however, romantic and soft-hearted snobs, whereas Galbraith is a pragmatic and hard-hearted one. This is why about Galbraith the man these successive memoirs reveal very little. He does not say a word about the decisive and great financial advantages that his marriage brought him. Here is this struggling instructor of economics; now he marries; and

*Snobbery has a natural inclination for conservatism and aristocracy and tradition, which is probably why the liberal snob is often less attractive, because less natural, than the conservative one.

suddenly he is careening through Europe with his wife in their own convertible, for the better part of a year. (I must also add that I have never known any instructor who had such a talent in gathering leaves of absence and arranging his grants.) Galbraith's description of his wife is agreeable and affectionate, he cannot be faulted or accused of hard-heartedness in that. But when it comes to himself, and to his often detailed descriptions of the stages of his career, his self-portrait is, more than often, disingenuous. Galbraith attempts to disarm his readers by avowing his self-esteem, suggesting that his repeatedly high estimate of himself was the result of his confidence in his intellectual superiority. Yet we can see, on occasion, that his snobbishness is much more social than intellectual. It is not only that he has been a master in allying himself to men and women who are high up and powerful; it is that here and there we may glimpse—to use an old bromide—the face behind the mask.†

There are curious and numerous instances of Galbraith's great attention to clothes, his repeated descriptions of who was and who wasn't "beautifully attired." There is his acid—and, let me add, largely correct—description of Princeton before World War II, his durable irritation with a university where "quite a few faculty members looked with admiration on the superior assurance and behavior of their students." But why is that so extraordinary? Were not many (if not most) students at Eton or Oxford or even Göttingen of a higher social class than were their professors? What difference did that make? For Galbraith it obviously made a great deal of difference. Early in his career, at Princeton, he resolved to rise above those rich fledglings, financially and socially. He was the kind of ambitious young man about whom Saki wrote that he had sprung from the people and had taken good care that there should be no recoil.

It is thus that Galbraith has been happier among the top bureaucrats than among the top professors; his desire for intellectual approbation had been subordinate to his desire to find his place among people in power. He certainly knew how to advance in the highest circles of the American establishment until, at this

†One man who may have seen through the mask was Truman, who had little time for Galbraith. Consequently Galbraith does not like Truman. He prefers John Kennedy to Truman (and in 1968 he preferred Robert Kennedy to Eugene McCarthy) which tells us something about Galbraith, though probably not much.

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stage of his career, he thinks he must pay an encomium to his secretary who "has regulated the tourist flow—the considerable number of travelers who, after viewing Concord, Lexington, the Old North Church and Harvard, are moved, however oddly, to view Galbraith." There is reason to believe that the monumental object of these pilgrimages does not think them so odd, after all. There is, alas, enough in the memoirs of this intelligent and impressive man to qualify him for the French epithet of a *faux bonhomme*, a man who is not as nice as he seems. He is one of those who looks up his FBI file; and he chose to include, with an evident chuckle, J. Edgar Hoover's summary of Galbraith: "Investigation favorable except conceited, egotistical and snobbish." I have no great admiration for Hoover or for the grammar of the above sentence: But it is far from being wrong. It sums up the issue in the way Hook cannot: It is Galbraith's character that matters, not his political ideas; the former governs the latter and not the reverse, not at all.

—John Lukacs
Phoenixville, Pennsylvania

Lukacs Hooked

Sidney Hook replies:

I am tempted to limit my comment on Lukacs's tirade to the old saw: A gentleman will not insult me, no other can. In simple justice to Galbraith, however, I wish to repudiate Lukacs's malicious insinuations about his character and to dissociate myself completely from them. There are some values that transcend politics. Lukacs has violated them by his scurrilities and cannot be considered *salonfähig* in decent assembly.

The ethics of controversy need not inhibit the pyrotechnics of animated criticism. Lukacs would have done well to have borrowed a leaf from William Buckley. In the latter's sustained exchanges with Galbraith, despite differences with him far more profound than mine, he has acknowledged Galbraith's generosity of spirit (and not only in his benefactions to students), his capacity to write lucid prose, and his sense of humor, of which fanatics like Lukacs seem devoid.

I would go further. Despite Galbraith's failure in the past to understand the nature of Communism, I am confident that in the crunch he will stand up to the enemies of freedom. That Galbraith underestimated the problems of security flowed naturally from his misconceptions of Bolshevik-Leninist theory and practice. There is not a particle of evidence that Isador Lubin was

anything but a dedicated public servant, one of the selfless architects of the New Deal whom John Dewey once referred to as living refutation of all the current anti-Semitic stereotypical slanders. He may have been mistaken in opposing the Polish London Government-in-Exile but this does not invalidate the justified criticism of the prewar authoritarian Polish regime and its anti-Semitic

excesses. In the early thirties I helped organize protest meetings against the treatment of Jewish students at Polish universities and the forcible attempts to compel them to sit on yellow benches. In the crucible of fire of the Ghetto Uprising and the Warsaw Revolt, that anti-Semitism has been burned away despite the efforts of the Polish Communist regime to resuscitate it a

few years ago. That Polish cavalry charged German and Soviet tanks is testimony to the perennial gallantry of Poles against hopeless odds. It has no bearing on the character of the prewar regime any more than the prowess of Russian serfs against Napoleon's army and of Soviet workers and peasants at Stalingrad mitigates the evils of serfdom or Stalinism. Galbraith praises Oscar

In earlier epochs, a critic tormented only the writers...



Of all the cants which are canted in this canting world—though the cant of hypocrites may be the worst—the cant of criticism is the most tormenting.

Laurence Sterne

In ours, he torments everybody.

Recently a middle-aged father published a book about his sordid adventures in massage parlors, wife-swapping communes and the worlds of easy sex and prostitution. The critics were grateful to Gay Talese. *Newsweek* said that "Talese's research has an awesome solidity about it." *Vogue* was proud of "... Gay's triumph over the puritanical strictures of Ocean City, strictures that so inhibited him that he didn't even masturbate until his second year in college." And the *Chicago Tribune*—a newspaper respectable primarily in its own eyes—turned its enthusiasm into promotion by running excerpts of *Thy Neighbor's Wife* for Chicagoland families to read.

The state of literary criticism today strongly confirms Laurence Sterne's warning: the cant of criticism is the most tormenting. To make things worse, the modern media have transformed the critic into a midwife of mass consciousness. Regardless of what we wish to know or ignore, we live with cultural events and their consequences—as interpreted by the modern critic. Sadly, what passes for "cultural criticism" in *Time*, *Esquire*, *Chicago Tribune*, *Ladies Home Journal*, et al., amounts to an elitist, moral shoddiness.

The Critical Difference

In *Chronicles of Culture*, we feel there is a need for a counterpoise to those

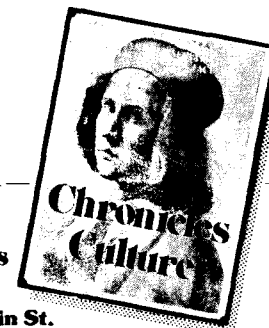
who judge cultural offerings without giving any thought to the impact of messages which are liberated from all codes of moral and intellectual responsibility. We firmly believe that culture, books, movies, behavioral trends—their meaning and success—deeply affect man's preferences and, consequently, his sense of moral and social order. We are not timid when we confront the liberal cultural cant. *The National Review* remarked that we, "Go for the jugular. ... *Chronicles* reports on the reporters, and reviews the reviewers. Its verdicts have not been kind."

The Critical Response

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the *London Times*, "... it is a relief to receive an American publication which puts forward another view. ... [*Chronicles*] displays a pleasantly open and ironic position. ... Who, among the liberal monopoly of power in this sphere, will reply to Tyrmand?"

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Lange only for his abilities. Lange was a very able man despite his defection. I knew him well. We broke over the Katyn massacre which he insisted in the face of the evidence was a Nazi not a Communist atrocity. Before that, he signaled his change of heart in a remark to me: "Only if the Americans are prepared to fight the Russians on the banks of the river Bug does it make sense for the Poles

to resist them." Nonetheless his critique of Communism, his characterization of the Soviet system as a form of "industrial serfdom," and his attempt to develop a market socialism to counter its totalitarian potential, were praiseworthy achievements.

I am not interested in Lukacs's judgment of my philosophical capacities since they are beyond his ca-

capacity to assess them, but I do find amusing, and yet rather puzzling, his assertion that my criticism of Galbraith has "a perceptible touch of envy." Of course none of us can be sure of his unconscious motives. So far as I know I have been envious—and often!—only of those who are wiser than I am, not richer or more famous. Indeed, why should I be envious of Galbraith? I have spent

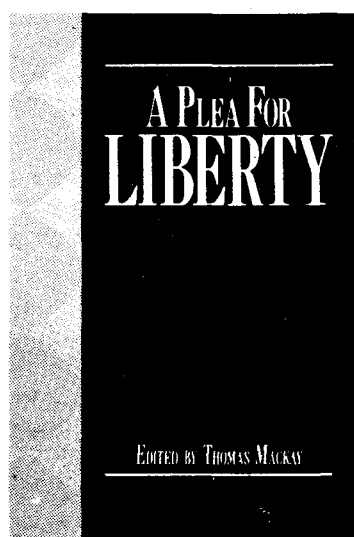
the larger part of my life in New York—the cultural and political capital of the nation. From the little experience I have had of Harvard, I discovered that Cambridge in winter was colder than New York and in summer hotter than blazes while the climate at Stanford is ideal, next door to Redwood City, declared by a Congress of Geographers to enjoy the best climate in the world. Since I carry my own resources within me I am intellectually at home—some unkind critics also say at war!—everywhere. I am very curious as to whom Lukacs has in mind when he refers to "right-wing Neanderthals at the Hoover Institution": Friedrich Hayek, Milton Friedman, Martin Lipset, John Bunzel, Edward Teller, Robert Conquest, William Goode, Alex Inkeles, Roger Freeman, Peter Duignan, Lewis Gann, Milorad Drachkovitch, James B. Stockdale? Disagree with them as one may, they are certainly worthy of being colleagues of Galbraith, a judgment from which Galbraith will hardly demur. Actually, some of them were once his colleagues and deserted Harvard for Stanford.

That Lukacs should patronize Galbraith for his lack of stylistic elegance is also amusing and puzzling. It is obvious that English is not Lukacs's mother tongue; I believe that Galbraith knows the meaning of "effluent." When I read the sentence I thought Galbraith was referring, albeit unjustly, to C.D. Jackson's cold war views. And the reference to "a lifeboat designed to sink as the ship sinks" is a perfectly apposite and intelligible expression to describe the function of "flexible price supports." My having started the previous sentence with "and" will convince Lukacs that like Galbraith I am an inelegant writer. One wonders what Lukacs makes of much of Churchill.

Lukacs's passion to score against me leads this stickler for grammar and diction to misread the sentence in which I wrote "if George Kennan does not win Galbraith over and he continues to resist the lunacy of unilateral disarmament, Galbraith, too, would fight for human freedom . . ." Lukacs interprets this as an attack on Kennan's sanity which he defends against "the mindless insolence of a New York cafeteria ideologue." (For a moment I expected that sentence to end with the words "rootless cosmopolitan.")

First of all, Kennan's position as I made clear was not one of unilateral disarmament but "Rather Red than Dead." Secondly, the advocacy of

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unilateral disarmament is political lunacy, and has been so characterized by many writers whom Galbraith admires, e.g., George Ball. Thirdly, a man may be guilty of political lunacy without being insane. The Stalinist theory of Social-Fascism is an ideal instance of political lunacy. It helped Hitler to come to power. But those who held it were not insane. I am not sure how many politically lunatic beliefs a person must hold before we consider him literally insane. Ancient wisdom warns us that a man who gets drunk occasionally is not necessarily a drunkard.

In my review of Galbraith I cautioned against the confusion of ground and cause in discussing ideas. Since Lukacs gives no grounds for his violent aspersions against Galbraith and his statements about me, I am compelled to speculate about their causes. I am uncertain as to why he is in such a frenzy about Galbraith. His animus against me derives from his resentment of my critical review in *East Europe* of his *History of the Cold War* (1961). Oddly enough, in that book he defends views that are very close to some of Galbraith's. He asserts that the U.S. and the USSR are becoming mirror images of one another (convergence?), that Americans "are beginning to think and look more like Germans than like Britons," that although Communism is an obvious "lie," anti-Communism is a "Half Truth" but "Half Truths may be more deceptively dangerous than are obvious lies," that the continuity between Czarist and Soviet foreign policy is more impressive than the discontinuity, that the mood which followed the accession of Alaska and Hawaii to the U.S. "is not unlike the official Soviet propaganda about the 'admission' of conquered territories (the Baltic nations for example) into the USSR." He discounts the importance of Communism as an ideology influencing Soviet behavior. In his eyes, concern with it is the stock in trade of cold war ideologues.

Lukacs's book expresses views quite congenial to those of Galbraith's which were the target of my criticisms of the latter's autobiography. Perhaps Lukacs finds it galling that Galbraith has got so far with them while he remains in the shade. He has more legitimate grounds for envy of Galbraith than I. However this may be, there is one ideological obsession from which Galbraith is completely free and which peeps out in an unguarded moment from Lukacs's psychological depths. In a horrendous passage on p. 164 of his book Lukacs writes:

The Central European Jewish refugee

scientists in 1939 convinced Roosevelt to build an atomic bomb, as they believed that their German colleagues were building one for Hitler. But Heisenberg and von Weizsäcker were not building bombs while other German technicians led by Von Braun, were building rockets that were to rain death on London in 1944. It was then with the German Von Braun and his rocket team that the Jewish Teller and Von Neumann allied themselves in America by 1954.

Lukacs is mistaken about German scientific efforts to build an atomic bomb. Attempts were made but they failed. More important, the Jewish scientists who warned against the possibility of German success and helped build atomic weapons did so not because they were Jewish but because they believed that human freedom was at stake. There were also non-Jews engaged in weapons research in the cause of freedom. Why make Jewish scientists the scapegoats? Someone has explained this gratuitous intrusion of *Judenhetze* as the self-hatred of an apostate Jew seeking social acceptance among his new coreligionists. Whatever the truth, I have no interest in knowing it. Lukacs has

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Labor Between Left and Right

Although American conservatives have never been particularly fond of the trade union movement, seldom have their misgivings been expressed with the passion marking Tom Bethell's polemic "*Solidarność Usurped*," which appeared in his "Capitol Ideas" column in the November 1981 *American Spectator*.

Unions, Bethell says, are "pockets of privilege expressly granted by the state, thus extensions of state power." Their main achievement is to have "extract[ed] from employers wages that are higher than the market would otherwise pay." Workers represented by unions are "a privileged group," whose rarefied status is secured by "a combination of legal protection, coercion, and threatened violence." Unions are also "legal conspiracies" directed against other, non-unionized workers. Worst of all, the unions are led by "bureaucrats" whose overriding function is "obstruction" at the workplace.

The last time I came across such vehement anti-labor arguments was some ten years ago, when the leading ideologues of the New Left were engaged in a reformulation of the Left's traditionally favorable view of trade unions. The similarity between their

attitudes and Bethell's is striking. To the radicals, organized labor had been transformed from a movement of revolutionary potential into an apologist for and supporter of a corrupt status quo. Domestically, unions helped to reinforce the hegemony of the giant corporations, while systematically persecuting minorities, women, and youthful non-conformists. They were, in short, bastions of "privilege" for white, middle-aged males. Globally, labor was perceived as an "extension" of American imperialist power, determined at all costs to obliterate workers' movements in the Third World. Finally, unions were led not by real proletarians, but rather by faceless bureaucrats, objectionable gangster types, or cigar-smoking authoritarians.

Back then it was not unusual for trade union members to be described as fascists. Tom Bethell does not call them fascists; he calls them neo-totalitarians, blind worshippers of state intrusion into the innermost reaches of our social and personal lives. As evidence, he cites several passages from the far-Left press, publications which, even in the woolly world of Left sectarians, are situated at the margin of the margins, and which, be it noted, devote much of their space to denunciations of the "class collaborationist" nature of our labor leaders.

As further evidence, Bethell cites a quote from Lane Kirkland's Solidarity Day speech. In Bethell's version, Kirkland declared that "only the state expresses your will not to destroy the programs that feed the roots of a decent society." In fact, Kirkland said no such thing. His actual words express a quite different meaning. "If you reject the notion that only the State, through its chief executive, faithfully expresses your will—look about you. You are not alone." [emphasis added]

Bethell, of course, is not anti-union. He expresses great admiration for the Polish Solidarity movement, in his words, a "genuine workers' movement." These days, everyone admires Solidarity. Or at least almost everyone. There are a few exceptions. There are the totalitarian leftists Bethell encountered in Washington. And there are others. The same day that I read Tom Bethell's piece on Solidarity Day I ran across the following comments, enunciated by one of America's leading banking executives:

... worker self-management (in Poland) ... would be counterproductive. In my opinion, what is needed for the immediate term ... is for greater centralization. And therefore, in my view, ... Solidarity has to ... be willing to work with the government and has to allow the government to retain centralized control over the economy.

This is fairly mild stuff compared to some of the remarks made by our captains of industry and finance, including outright expressions of hope that the Soviets would move in and "restore order" in their obstreperous neighbor. Such views should not be taken lightly; certainly our business class has more influence over the future course of events in Poland than the editors of *Workers' World*. But for Tom Bethell, the main danger is the nascent totalitarian impulses in the labor movement. Just who does he think has been supporting Solidarity? The business community? The banks? It has, of course, been the labor movement which has been supporting Solidarity—financially, morally, and politically—and which also has been working for the ideal of free trade unionism in the Communist world for decades, often in direct opposition to a business community captivated by the promises of détente dollars.

Concerning Bethell's distress over the labor movement's "protected" status under U.S. law, it should be pointed out that Solidarity is seeking much the same kind of protection, as would free trade unions in any

society. As for unions being "legal conspiracies" specifically exempted from prosecution under antitrust laws," the fact is that there is practically no major institution that is not in some way or another sanctioned, encouraged, or subsidized by the federal government, with the business community being well up on the list of those receiving special benefits and favors. Bethell's argument is simply the reverse side of the coin of those leftists who argue that membership on a corporate board makes one an "agent of the state." Moreover, the use of the word "conspiracy" implies that the legal rights enjoyed by unions are the result of some form of illegal collusion between the government and the labor movement. In fact, the Wagner Act was democratically enacted by Congress and signed by the President. It was not issued by bureaucratic fiat or court order.

Furthermore, unions in the United States are subject to any number of laws that regulate and limit their activities; they are, in fact, far more subject to government control than unions in most other Western democracies.

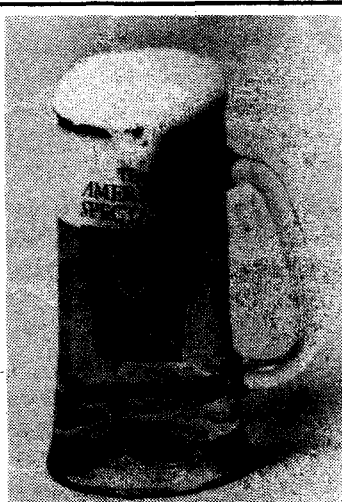
Bethell objects to unions as obstructionist, by which he means they sometimes oppose management policies. Presumably he would prefer the Soviet labor model. There are no obstructionist shop stewards in Russia, since there are no genuine unions. There the "unions" are concerned above all else with increasing productivity, fulfilling the plan, and getting more work from the workers. I am not being sarcastic here. Bethell praises Solidarity as a "genuine workers' movement." But it is far from clear what role he would assign to such a movement, aside from enforcing whatever decisions were handed down by the enterprise management. Evidently that role wouldn't be terribly significant, given Bethell's low opinion not merely of unions, but of workers themselves. He tells us, for instance, that most unemployed workers are probably not interested in seeking gainful work, being satisfied with the extravagant unemployment compensation they receive.

That Bethell's polemics reek of the contempt for workers and hatred of the labor movement which typified the writings of the SDS is no mere coincidence. Like the New Left, Bethell is a proponent of a return to class warfare. In Bethell's case, however, it is the business class which has the historical assignment of effecting revolutionary change. That this class does not recognize its true mission is all the more reason for

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Bethell, self-consciously part of the vanguard, to step up the rhetoric. In this view, trade unionists are obstructionists for the sake of obstruction; workers themselves are lazy slobs who leave uneaten chicken wings lying around the picnic grounds. Only the business class has the ingenuity, creative vitality, and dedication to excellence required to pull Western society out of its economic stagnation and safeguard democracy. The workers, for their part, could do with a strong dose of Calvinism.

I fully recognize the importance of the entrepreneurial spirit. But Tom Bethell has seriously misread recent history if he believes that the business class can by itself provide a successful defense of a democratic culture and society. Business has a rather sorry track record in defending the traditional values which underpin democracy. When the counterculture was waging all-out war against Western democratic institutions, it was not the business class which provided effective opposition. Indeed, by its eagerness to exploit the "youth culture" for maximum profits, business encouraged some of the worst attitudes of the counterculture. Nor, as pointed out earlier, could those disturbed about the illusions of détente depend on the support of business; rather, they faced business's active opposition. Here the election of Reagan has changed nothing. While our energy giants have been lobbying against U.S. support for anti-Marxist forces in Angola, the business community in general has been notable in its lack of enthusiasm for the Reagan defense buildup. Nor is there any evidence to suggest that the pro-business policies introduced by the Administration will bring about massive new investment in the American economy; it seems, rather, that mergers, tax shelters, and acquisitions will continue to be the order of the day.

In at least one sense, the New Left had a more accurate perception of American society than do our conservatives today. It recognized labor as a force for a stable, prosperous America, and as a bulwark of American democratic ideals around the world. It was for this reason that the New Left hated labor, and attempted, with a startling lack of success, to encourage the emergence of a "substitute proletariat"—students and black revolutionaries—as the agent for revolution. Although he seeks radically different goals, Tom Bethell has reached conclusions which notably parallel those of the New

Left. Ultimately, however, Tom Bethell's view of the forces which shape American society are no more accurate than Tom Hayden's.

—Arch Puddington
Executive Director
League for Industrial Democracy
New York, New York

P.S. The above was written prior to the military coup in Poland. Western response to the hideous events there only reinforces my conclusions. Almost without exception, our financial elite has expressed satisfaction, albeit anonymously, that General Jaruzelski has moved to set Polish society in order. They have also acknowledged having engaged in secret negotiations with the Soviets over repayment of the Polish debt a short time before martial law was declared. If Tom Bethell or anyone else is sincerely interested in exposing the forces that threaten democracy, he would be better advised to investigate what transpired during these negotiations rather than grousing about the messages on placards at a trade union rally.

Bravo! Bethell

A big, fat double bravo to Tom Bethell for his two well-written, informative, and entertaining pieces in the January *American Spectator*.

One minor point about his "Taxing Interest Rates" concerns his statement: "... the Consumer Price Index rose by .8 percent in August. Multiply this by 12 to find the annual rate ..." Wrong. The .8 percent accumulates, it does not merely add up.

Of course, the real figures only enhance Bethell's central argument.

—J Scott G
North Hollywood, California

Encounters With Fawn Brodie

I thoroughly enjoyed Frank Gannon's review of Fawn Brodie's biography of Richard Nixon (December 1981) because it reminded me of a previous, forgotten, pleasant encounter with a review of Brodie's work. As an undergrad, I read portions of her *Thomas Jefferson: An Intimate History*, as well as Gary Wills's "Uncle Thomas's Cabin" which appeared in the *New York Review of Books* and in which he proclaimed her "the fasting saint and very hermit of ignorance." Gannon's work demonstrates that Brodie benefited not a whit from Wills's savage yet instructive pillorying; she apparently went to her grave unrepentantly unacquainted with rigorous argument. Her bag of tricks still contained the beatification of irrelevant detail, a free-form approach to facts, and a reliance on

innuendo and rhetorical questions to establish the parts of her thesis. The result, as Wills noted, was a "towering conjecture," and, as Gannon found, a thoroughly bad book. . . .

—Jack Park
Springfield, Virginia

I am amazed and disappointed that you would devote more than 13 columns of your publication to Frank Gannon's analysis of what he describes as Fawn Brodie's "very bad book."

Perhaps the recent increase in the price of newsprint will aid you in a decision to reject the publication of reviews of other very bad books in the future (if you need some economic reason).

I was disappointed. —E.L. Newton
Executive Vice President
Nevada Taxpayers Association
Carson City, Nevada

The Martini Consumer

The "martini philosophy"? Mr. Dannhauser has discussed it with an eloquence the drink demands (November 1981).

Two questions linger in my mind, however, like mature ice cubes before a refresher: "Gin or Vodka?" and "Up or Down?"

I believe there is a growing trend toward vodka martinis, on the rocks. While they are every bit as efficient as their erstwhile counterparts, they do not have the "bite." And, putting your martini on ice takes away that distinct line of completion; you can have as many refreshers as you want without a concerned companion commenting on the exact number of martinis consumed. It does, however, result in an undignified pursuit of your olive.

—Patrick H. Gray, Jr.
Southborough, Massachusetts

The Sweeping Indictment of Judicial Activism

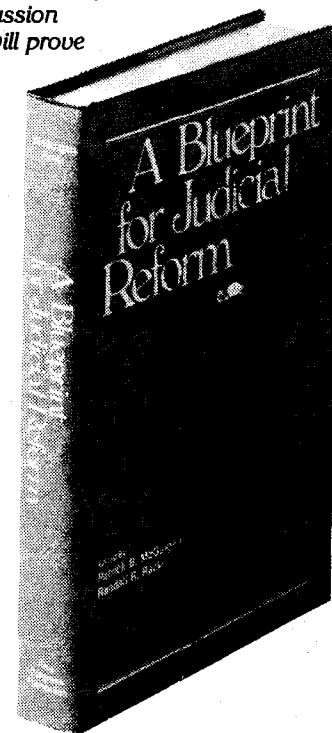
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The Daily Pennsylvanian

Higher education as perpetrated at the venerable University of Pennsylvania and reported in that institution's fabulous student newspaper:

Over 70 people, most of them University students, discussed the meaning of racism and its effect on society at the Racism Awareness Workshop on Saturday.

A short filmstrip differentiated racism from racial prejudice by defining racism as prejudice backed by institutional power. Following this definition, the film said that while some blacks might hate all whites, only whites can be considered racist because they have the institutional power to act on their prejudice.

Wade told the group that by definition, all whites were racist because they enjoyed the benefits of living in a white racist society, even if individually, a white was not racially prejudiced.

"The system is rigged, and the system is racist," she said. "Because they benefit from a lifestyle based on a concept of white supremacy and black inferiority and because of the inherent benefit from being in this society, all whites are racist."

Throughout the first half of the program, Wade repeatedly stressed that she forgave the white participants for their racism, a sentiment which made many whites uncomfortable. Several audience members had difficulty accepting the premise that they were racist, and questioned Wade about the validity of calling all whites racist.

Wade was visibly pleased with the group's struggle to accept her definition and held her ground.

[November 16, 1981]

The Sciences

From the journal of the New York Academy of Sciences, a stupefying report on enlightenment's march into the antediluvian stronghold of medical education:

The mid-Atlantic chapters of the American Medical Women's Association have in the past criticized the way medical students are taught to do pelvic and breast examinations. In 1979 they found that such teaching has not changed during the past twenty-five years in half the schools surveyed. Ten percent of the schools offered no instructions on how to examine women's breasts, and twenty-five percent provided no training in performing pelvic examinations. Most instructors were male. But there is encouraging evidence of change.

At Utah, trained female educators teach medical students to do pelvic exams. First there is an hour of explanation, slides, and discussion of patients' feelings. Then the students perform a pelvic examination on the teacher. If the speculum is inserted improperly, the student is corrected, and better techniques are suggested.

[December 1981]

Soho News

Another colossal moral eruption from Pete Hamill, seven years after The Resignation, thirteen years after The Election, twenty years after The Vice Presidency, twenty-nine years after The Checkers Speech, and sixty-eight years after The Birth—lest we forget:

... He won't die. I know it now. I know that the permanent existence of Richard Nixon is what my generation must endure instead of purgatory. We have lived with his sullen presence for most of our lives. We pay for our sins by that continuing affront: Richard Nixon is alive and well, and he got away with everything.

He got away with the red-baiting of Jerry Voorhis and the spiritual mugging of Helen Gahagan Douglas; he got away with accusing the Democrats of "20 years of treason"; he got away with the drunken bitterness of the "last press conference" in California in 1962. He got away with dodging taxes and using government money to enhance his personal property. And most of all, he got away with the crim of Watergate.

Richard Nixon isn't a rascal. Richard Nixon is a hoodlum. He doesn't have the class of a Frank Costello or the intelligence of a Meyer Lansky, but he is basically a hoodlum. And the Reagan people should be very careful. Nixon's use of the Sadat funeral to go off to Saudi Arabia, two weeks after the publication of his anti-Semitic ravings, is typical of what happens when you try to be nice to a hoodlum.

And this hoodlum Nixon goes on and on and on. I'm not asking that he be struck dead; I don't wish that on anyone. But I do think the decent people of this country should insist that the sentence of public disgrace be carried out. Nixon never made a license plate in Leavenworth. But he could remain caged in a prison of official ostracism. The man to give that order is Reagan; if he doesn't, Nixon will dirty him up as he has dirtied almost everyone else he ever touched. I say that and know it won't happen. Nixon will go on forever. He is, after all, the man who got away with everything.

[November 17, 1981]

The Humanist

The sublime fecalbuccal of a fallen Baptist:

This letter is being written in the hope that it will accomplish two things: that I will receive more information on how to become a member of the American Humanist Association and that it will serve as an outlet for some feelings that, until reading your magazine, seemed to me unique.

I am twenty-one years old and I live and go to college in Arkansas. I was raised in a Southern Baptist family, and, so far, this background has caused a lot of turmoil within me. I would like only to be allowed to believe in what I think is good and right without threats of eternal

condemnation. I believe that by trying my best to be an altruist, I will come as close to being a "Christian" as I could ever hope to be. Most people I know won't admit that Jerry Falwell is a threat, not because they actually believe in what he is doing but because they are so afraid that they might be wrong and by one slip up they would be sent, without questions asked, straight to hell. Yet, these people, my people, are the same ones who would die if a black person moved into their neighborhood. All I know for sure is that they are not serious about being good people and I really am.

After I read your magazine I realized that not only am I a member of the human race but there are actually some human beings out there who are like me. What a nice surprise. I want to thank you for sharing some promising thoughts with me.

[September/October 1981]

The Progressive

A New-Age analysis of criminal behavior with some salutatory hints on what can be done about it from Dr. Robert Elins, another of the *Progressive's* great clarifiers:

We've heard it all before: Violence is the work of "professional criminals," a small group of repeat offenders who hold the rest of us hostage. This analysis, of course, constitutes the ageless practice of blaming "bad apples," implying that if we can just put away the few hardened criminals, then the system will be cleansed. ... We tend to emphasize the crimes of only some Americans—those of the lower and working classes. Some of these acts are, indeed, violent. But our preoccupation with rape, murder, and the other index crimes of the Federal Bureau of Investigation's Uniform Crime Reports diverts our attention from many other acts of violence which are not even talked about, much less made criminal. And yet this latter kind of violence poses a far greater threat to our lives and limbs than the isolated, ugly acts that fit our standard definition of crime.

Each year, workplace injuries cause 14,200 deaths—almost all of which are preventable by safety devices. In addition, 100,000 people die annually of diseases that can be traced to coal tar, dust, asbestos, and other substances. All of these deaths are also preventable. A death resulting from a common crime may occur every twenty-six minutes in the United States, but a death resulting from a preventable industrial cause occurs every four minutes. Is permitting hazards in the workplace truly a lesser crime than street violence?

Or take health care. Improper emergency care ... kills 20,000 people each year, and unnecessary operations claim 16,000 lives. It has been estimated that 22 percent of our prescriptions are unnecessary, and improper drug use causes an additional 2,000 to 10,000 deaths every year. This readily competes with our 3,600 annual stabbing deaths. Should we

add the scalpel to our list of lethal weapons? How about the syringe, or the prescription. ...

The way, then, to reduce the level of crime in our society is not through reform of juvenile justice systems, police-community relations, or sentencing practices; nor is it through building more prisons and putting more people in them. What we need to do is make fundamental, systemic changes that diminish or abolish unrestrained competition, community and family fragmentation, alienation, and inequality. These are the major sources of crime in America, and they produce law-breaking at all levels.

Do we make these fundamental transformations, or do we live with our clichés, failed reforms, and likely a knife or scalpel—at our throats.

[September 1981]

National Organization of Women's Newsletter

An exquisite *cri des nerfs* delivered at a recent NOW gathering at the Lincoln Monument. The piece itself is based on an earlier work written by Ms. Abrahamia Lincoln, an early feminist assassinated in Ford's Theater by a Southern chauvinist:

A Call to the Nation's Conscience—Ten-score and five years ago, our mothers and fathers brought forth upon this continent a new nation, conceived in liberty and dedicated to the proposition that all women and men are created equal.

Now we are engaged in a great civil struggle, testing whether that nation ... or any nation, so conceived and so dedicated ... can long endure.

We are met at a critical point in that struggle. We are met to honor those who, like Abigail Adams, Susan B. Anthony, Elizabeth Cady Stanton, and Alice Paul, dedicated their lives that this nation might achieve equality under the law for all its people.

But, in a larger sense, we cannot dedicate, we cannot consecrate, we cannot hallow, this ground. The brave women and men living and dead, who have struggled for the Equal Rights Amendment, have consecrated it far above our poor power to add or detract.

The world will little note nor long remember what we say here; but it can never forget what they have given to the just cause of equality under the law.

It is for us, the living, to be dedicated, here, to the unfinished work that they have thus far so nobly carried on. It is for us to be here dedicated to the great task remaining before us; that from these we honor we take increased devotion to that cause for which they have given the last full measure of devotion; that we highly resolve that they shall not have worked in vain, that the nation shall, under God, have a new birth of freedom, and the government of all the people, by all the people, for all the people, shall not perish from the earth.

[Fall 1981]

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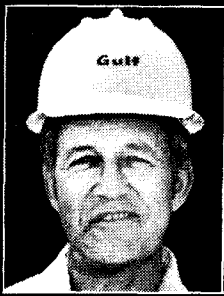
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**"Gulf's underground heat treatment gets
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